ALBERTA
JUSTICE

ANNUAL REPORT

2002/03

Government of Alberta
2001 & 2002 IPAC
Gold Award
for Innovative
Management

Alberta
JUSTICE

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ISBN 07785-0375-5
September 2003

104-02435/

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Preface

The Public Accounts of Alberta are prepared in accordance with the *Financial Administration Act* and the *Government Accountability Act*. The public accounts consist of the annual report of the Government of Alberta and the annual reports of each of the 24 ministries.

The annual report of the Government of Alberta released June 24, 2003 contains the Minister of Finance's accountability statement, the consolidated financial statements of the province and a comparison of the actual performance results to desired results set out in the government's business plan, including the *Measuring Up* report.

This annual report of the Ministry of Justice contains the minister's accountability statement, the audited financial statements of the ministry and a comparison of actual performance results to desired results set out in the ministry business plan. This ministry annual report also includes other financial information as required by the *Financial Administration Act* and *Government Accountability Act*, either as separate reports or as a part of the financial statements, to the extent that the ministry has anything to report.

Accountability Statement

The ministry's annual report for the year ended March 31, 2003, was prepared under my direction in accordance with the *Government Accountability Act* and the government's accounting policies. All of the government's policy decisions as at September 15, 2003, with material economic or fiscal implications of which I am aware, have been considered in the preparation of this report.

Dave Hancock, Q.C.
Minister of Justice
and Attorney General

Mission and Vision

Our mission is to serve Albertans by promoting safe communities, by ensuring access to the courts and other methods of dispute resolution, by providing legal and related strategic services to the Government of Alberta, and by communicating with Albertans about the administration of justice.

Our vision is a democratic and prosperous Alberta based on respect for the law, where all Albertans are safe in their homes and communities and have confidence in the justice system, and where disputes are resolved fairly and effectively.

A Message from the Minister

I am pleased to present the ministry's annual report for 2002/03.

Alberta Justice works closely with Alberta Solicitor General and other ministries to ensure that our justice system is responsive to the needs of victims, offenders and those involved in civil or family disputes. Our primary focus is on improving access to the justice system and providing legal services to vulnerable Albertans and client ministries. We do this, in part, by ensuring access to the courts and other methods of dispute resolution, and by communicating with Albertans about the justice system.

Streamlining the court system and making it more efficient remains a priority. One example of this is our work on the Unified Family Court, which once established will improve family law services to Albertans by providing integrated services and simplified procedures. With the assistance of the judiciary and the legal community, we have also initiated numerous programs that help people settle civil and family law matters outside of court including mediation, judicial dispute resolution and dispute resolution officers.

In our criminal courts, early case resolution has provided significant savings for the justice system by determining if a case or portion of a case can be resolved in an appropriate manner without unnecessary court appearances. This initiative continues to reduce wait times for cases that go to trial, while saving thousands of police and civilian witnesses from appearing in court.

This past year, we also provided specialized new services for child victims and witnesses by opening child-friendly courtrooms in Edmonton and Medicine Hat. This initiative will help ensure that children are dealt with sensitively and are not re-traumatized by the criminal court process.

In response to increased demand for civil legal services to government in recent years, our Civil Law Branch is developing protocols with client ministries to maximize the value of the services we provide and clarify responsibilities for the provision of legal services.

While Alberta Justice made some important strides throughout 2002/03, we have also laid the groundwork for change and progress in a number of key areas.

Through consultations with the public, judiciary and the legal community, we began gathering input on how to improve the justice system, including a proposal to create a Single Trial Court. We continue to work with Alberta Infrastructure to look at innovative ways to build new court facilities in Calgary. We are also exploring the increased use of technology to streamline court administration through initiatives such as an electronic filing and case management system.

Our goal remains creating a justice system that meets the needs of Albertans both now and in the future. We will reach this goal through our commitment to innovation, timely access to services, and by making Alberta's good justice system even better.

Dave Hancock, Q.C.
Minister of Justice and Attorney General

Management's Responsibility for Reporting

The executives of the individual entities within the ministry have the primary responsibility and accountability for the respective entities. Collectively, the executives ensure the ministry complies with all relevant legislation, regulations and policies.

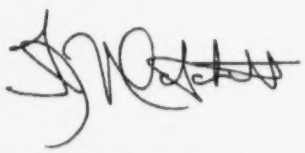
Ministry business plans, annual reports, performance results and the supporting management information are integral to the government's fiscal and business plans, annual report, quarterly reports and other financial and performance reporting.

Responsibility for the integrity and objectivity of the financial statements and performance results for the ministry rests with the Minister of Justice. Under the direction of the minister, I oversee the preparation of the ministry's annual report, including financial statements and performance results. The financial statements and the performance results, of necessity, include amounts that are based on estimates and judgments. The financial statements are prepared in accordance with the government's stated accounting policies.

As deputy minister, in addition to program responsibilities, I establish and maintain the ministry's financial administration and reporting functions. The ministry maintains systems of financial management and internal control, which give consideration to costs, benefits, and risks that are designed to:

- provide reasonable assurance that transactions are properly authorized, executed in accordance with prescribed legislation and regulations, and properly recorded so as to maintain accountability of public money,
- provide information to manage and report on performance,
- safeguard the assets and properties of the province under ministry administration,
- provide Executive Council, Treasury Board, the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Justice any information needed to fulfil their responsibilities, and
- facilitate preparation of ministry business plans and annual reports required under the *Government Accountability Act*.

In fulfilling my responsibilities for the ministry, I have relied, as necessary, on the executive of the individual entities within the ministry.



Terrence J. Matchett, Q.C.
Deputy Minister of Justice
and Deputy Attorney General
Ministry of Justice

September 15, 2003

MINISTRY OVERVIEW

Minister of Justice and Attorney General

- Alberta Review Board
- Fatality Review Board
- Judicial Council
- Rules of Court Committee
- Provincial Court Nominating Committee
- Notaries Public Review Committee

Deputy Minister of Justice and Deputy Attorney General

- Communications
- Court Services
  - Calgary Court Operations
  - Edmonton Court Operations
  - Regional Court Operations
  - Program Support
- Criminal Justice
  - Appeals
  - General Prosecutions
  - Management and Leadership Services
  - Special Prosecutions
- Human Resource Services
  - Staffing
  - Classification
  - Employee Relations
  - Staff Training and Development
  - Employee Programs
- Legal Services
  - Civil Law
  - Legislative Counsel
  - Medical Examiner
  - Public Trustee
- Maintenance Enforcement
  - Client Services
  - Collections
  - Program Support
- Strategic Services
  - Strategic Management Services
  - Financial Services
  - Strategic Business Services

Boards, Agencies and Committees

JUDICIAL COUNCIL

The Judicial Council screens individuals to determine if they are qualified for appointment to the Provincial Court of Alberta. The council is granted jurisdiction to deal with complaints against masters, provincial court judges and justices of the peace. The Minister of Justice appoints two members of this council. The remaining four members are designated under the *Judicature Act*.

The Honourable E. Walter - Chief Judge of the Provincial Court of Alberta
Telephone: (780) 427-6330; Fax: (780) 427-2077

PROVINCIAL COURT NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Provincial Court Nominating Committee provides recommendations to the Minister of Justice on the appointment of individuals to the Provincial Court of Alberta. The committee members are appointed by the Minister of Justice.

Administration Office
Telephone: (780) 422-9625; Fax: (780) 422-6613

ALBERTA REVIEW BOARD

The Alberta Review Board makes or reviews dispositions concerning any accused person for whom a verdict of "not criminally responsible because of mental disorder" or "unfit to stand trial" is rendered, according to the provisions of the *Criminal Code* of Canada. The board also has the responsibility for determining whether a person should be subject to a detention order or conditional discharge or be granted an absolute discharge. The board's nine members are appointed by the lieutenant governor in council.

The Honourable Judge M. Stevens-Guille - Chair
Telephone: (780) 422-5994; Fax: (780) 427-1762

FATALITY REVIEW BOARD

The Fatality Review Board is responsible for reviewing certain deaths investigated by the Medical Examiner's Office and recommending to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General whether a public fatality inquiry should be held. The board is appointed by the lieutenant governor in council and is composed of a lawyer, a physician and a layperson. The chief medical examiner is also a member of the board, but cannot vote on any matter before it. Cases reviewed by the board generally include accidental deaths (where recommendations could be made at a public fatality inquiry for the prevention of similar deaths in the future), cases where the cause and manner of death remain undetermined after a complete investigation, and deaths of individuals who are in police custody, in prison, certified under the *Mental Health Act*, or under the Director of Child Welfare's guardianship or in the director's custody.

Diane Colley-Urquhart - Chair
Telephone: (403) 297-8123; Fax: (403) 297-3429

NOTARIES PUBLIC REVIEW COMMITTEE

The Notaries Public Review Committee advises the Minister of Justice on appointments of lay notaries public. The committee consists of a member of the Law Society of Alberta, a member of the business community and a member of the ministry, who is the secretary. All are appointed by ministerial order under the *Government Organization Act*. The committee reviews applications for appointment and then provides recommendations to the Minister of Justice.

I. Kay, Q.C. - Chair
Telephone: (780) 427-5069; Fax: (780) 427-6821

RULES OF COURT COMMITTEE

The Rules of Court Committee makes recommendations to the Minister of Justice on amendments to the Rules of Court made under the *Court of Appeal Act*, the *Court of Queen's Bench Act* or any other act. The committee consists of the chief justice of Alberta or a justice of the Court of Appeal designated by the chief justice, the chief justice of the Court of Queen's Bench or a justice of the Court of Queen's Bench designated by the chief justice of that court, the chief judge of the Provincial Court of Alberta or a judge of the provincial court designated by the chief judge. Two members are also appointed by the Law Society of Alberta and one member by the Minister of Justice.

The Honourable Mr. Justice J. Côté - Chair
Geoff Ho, Q.C. - Secretary
Telephone: (780) 427-3557; Fax: (780) 422-6613

Department of Justice

COMMUNICATIONS

As assigned from the Public Affairs Bureau, the Communications Division provides advice to the department and the minister on strategic communications, issues management and public relations. The Communications Division also leads public legal education initiatives on behalf of the department.

M. Shields - Director
Telephone: (780) 427-8530; Fax: (780) 422-7363
E-mail: michael.shields@gov.ab.ca

COURT SERVICES DIVISION

Court Services provides administrative, planning and technical support to Alberta's three courts: the Court of Appeal of Alberta (in two locations), the Court of Queen's Bench (in 13 locations) and the Provincial Court of Alberta (in 75 locations). Staff are located in 23 centres and the courts circuit to an additional 52 locations.

The three courts maintain all court records and accept a wide variety of documents for filing from the public, lawyers, law enforcement agencies and other government departments. Employees record all court proceedings, swear in or affirm witnesses and interpreters, mark and ensure the safekeeping of exhibits, process fines and other payments into court, perform searches, and provide general assistance to lawyers and the public.

Court Services also operates law libraries to provide legal information to judges, Crown prosecutors, defence counsel and the public.

Assistant Deputy Minister
Telephone: (780) 427-9620; Fax: (780) 422-9639

CRIMINAL JUSTICE DIVISION

Criminal Justice prosecutes all offences under the *Criminal Code* of Canada, the *Youth Criminal Justice Act* and the provincial statutes in all the courts of the province and the Supreme Court of Canada. This work includes, but is not limited to, homicide, assault (sexual, aggravated), impaired driving, break and enter, theft and fraud, speeding and other driving offences, but excludes adult drug offences. Criminal Justice works with justice system stakeholders and the community to promote safe communities and implement alternative approaches to the administration of justice.

The division is divided into four branches. The first, *Management and Leadership Services*, provides direct service to the minister and executive management and is responsible for leading policy and planning initiatives within the division and for coordinating these activities with other stakeholders. The *Appeals Branch* is responsible for criminal appeals to the Court of Appeal and the Supreme Court of Canada and provides legal and strategic advice with respect to legislation impacting the Criminal Justice Division. *Special Prosecutions* provides specialized prosecutorial services in areas of organized crime, significant commercial or corporate crime or crimes committed against government. *General Prosecutions* is responsible for all cases apart from those assigned to the other branches.

K. Tjosvold, Q.C. - Assistant Deputy Minister
Telephone: (780) 427-5046; Fax: (780) 422-9639
E-mail: ken.tjosvold@gov.ab.ca

HUMAN RESOURCE SERVICES DIVISION

Human Resource Services provides strategic direction and consultation in the areas of employee/labour relations, staffing, organizational design and change, job evaluation, performance planning, training and development, leadership capacity and wellness.

The division supports the achievement of cross-government and Corporate Human Resource plans and strategies.

S. Perras - Executive Director
Telephone: (780) 427-9617; Fax: (780) 422-9639
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LEGAL SERVICES DIVISION

The Legal Services Division is responsible for all civil legal services.

Civil Law provides legal and related strategic services to all government ministries and represents them in matters before the courts and tribunals. Its Constitutional and Aboriginal Law Branch provides specialized advice to the government concerning constitutional and aboriginal matters. The Legal Research and Analysis Branch provides advice on legislative policy.

Legislative Counsel is responsible for drafting government bills, regulations and Orders in Council. This office also works with the Queen's Printer to make the laws of Alberta available to the public.

The Medical Examiner's Office investigates all unexplained natural deaths and unnatural deaths in Alberta under authority of the *Fatality Inquiries Act*. The findings are used to assist in resolving civil and criminal law matters that often arise after a death. The Fatality Review Board reviews cases investigated by the Medical Examiner's Office and recommends to the Minister of Justice in which cases a public fatality inquiry should be held. These inquiries are held before a Provincial Court judge.

The Public Trustee, acting under the *Public Trustee Act*, protects the financial interests of vulnerable Albertans by administering the estates of dependent adults, decedents and minors.

P. Hartman - Assistant Deputy Minister
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P. Pagano - Chief Legislative Counsel
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E-mail: peter.pagano@gov.ab.ca

G. Dowling - Chief Medical Examiner
Telephone: (780) 427-4987; Fax: (780) 422-1265
E-mail: graeme.dowling@gov.ab.ca

J. Klinck - Public Trustee
Telephone: (780) 422-3141; Fax: (780) 422-9136
E-mail: jack.klinck@gov.ab.ca

MAINTENANCE ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM

The Maintenance Enforcement Program (MEP) ensures that individuals meet their obligations to pay spousal and child support under the terms of their court orders and certain agreements. Once an order or agreement has been registered with MEP, maintenance payments that the debtor (payor) would normally remit directly to the creditor (recipient) are sent to MEP. MEP then forwards the payment to the creditor once the funds have cleared through a trust account.

In cases of default, or non-payment by the debtor, MEP has the legislative authority to take steps to enforce the support owed. These enforcement tools include registrations at Land Titles and the Personal Property Registry; wage, non-wage and federal garnishees; federal licence (passport) denials; and motor vehicle restrictions and driver's licence cancellations, registration at the credit bureau and compelling attendance at default court hearings. MEP also has access to a variety of databases to assist in locating a debtor or a debtor's assets or income.

There are over 90,000 creditors and debtors and over 60,000 children registered with MEP.

Manuel da Costa - Director
Telephone: (780) 401-7500; Fax: (780) 401-7575
E-mail: manuel.dacosta@gov.ab.ca

STRATEGIC SERVICES DIVISION

The Strategic Services Division provides strategic information, tools and processes to achieve the department's goals and enhance its effectiveness. The division provides professional services and strategic advice on matters related to cross-government initiatives, business planning and performance measurement, financial management, accounting and reporting, information technology management and strategy and FOIP administration, business resumption and capital planning. The division also provides these strategic services to Alberta Solicitor General.

The division also manages provincial programs on behalf of Alberta Justice, including the Motor Vehicle Accident Claims program, a province-wide *Criminal Code* fines collection service, and the Family and Criminal Court Worker programs.

D. Mercer - Assistant Deputy Minister
Telephone: (780) 427-3301; Fax: (780) 422-9639
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Operational Overview

Alberta Justice had four core business functions in 2002/03:

Prosecutions: prosecute criminal and other offences, giving priority to the prosecution of serious and violent crime.

Courts: provide Albertans access to the courts and other dispute resolution processes.

Legal Services to Government: provide legal and related strategic services to government ministries.

Justice Services to Albertans in Need: provide support and protection to some of Alberta's most vulnerable citizens, including families who depend on court-ordered maintenance payments, individuals unable to protect their financial interests, and individuals who cannot afford legal counsel.

Safe communities are a shared responsibility. We work to develop and enhance partnerships necessary to achieve results in each of these core business functions. Additionally, we strive to improve public knowledge and understanding about the justice system through education and communication strategies.

Key Factors Influencing Performance

Environmental factors include: organized crime, technology and globalization, demographics, family structure, youth trends, Aboriginal justice issues, and community and local justice issues. These factors have imposed pressures on the administration of justice in a variety of ways.

Organized crime is evolving and expanding and this growth is facilitated by technology and globalization. While modern technology has facilitated the rapid movement of people, capital and information, it is also making it much more difficult and costly for police to detect and investigate organized criminal activities and for the Crown Prosecutors Office and court system to process these cases. Challenges for the ministry will be to utilize new technology to increase accessibility and improve the efficiency of the justice system in Alberta and to partner with national and international enforcement agencies to produce a credible response to complex global economic and organized crime.

Alberta's population continues to outpace the national rate, and was among the strongest in Canada at 1.83 per cent in 2001. Although Alberta's crime rates remain the lowest in western Canada, Alberta is the youngest Canadian province and youth tend to be over-represented as both offenders and as victims of crime. Despite being the youngest province, Alberta, like the rest of Canada, has an aging population with an increasing proportion of seniors who have a heightened susceptibility to certain types of crime and fear of crime.

The number of common-law and single-parent families has increased significantly since the early 1990s. More children are experiencing parental separation and growing up in non-traditional families. These trends will continue to contribute to an increase in the number of people accessing family courts, mediation services, parenting after separation courses and the Maintenance Enforcement Program.

Canada's Aboriginal population is growing twice as fast as the country's total population and it is proportionally younger. Aboriginal people are significantly over-represented in the criminal justice system. The ministry continues to work with municipalities non-governmental organizations, other government ministries, Aboriginal peoples and organizations to deliver services in a manner that supports community development and promotes safe Aboriginal communities.

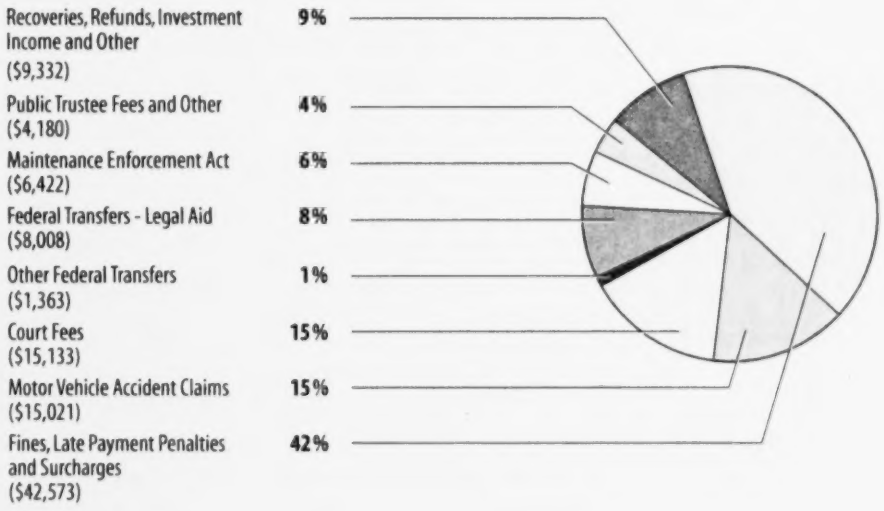
The ministry must, through the many programs and services it provides, continue to promote the public's confidence in the justice system. The Justice Summit identified the need for victims to have a more meaningful role in all stages of the justice process. Another developing trend is the movement towards treatment-based initiatives and specialization, such as drug treatment courts, mental health courts and domestic violence courts. Government is supportive of communities becoming more involved with the youth justice system at the local level.

Highlights – Performance at a Glance

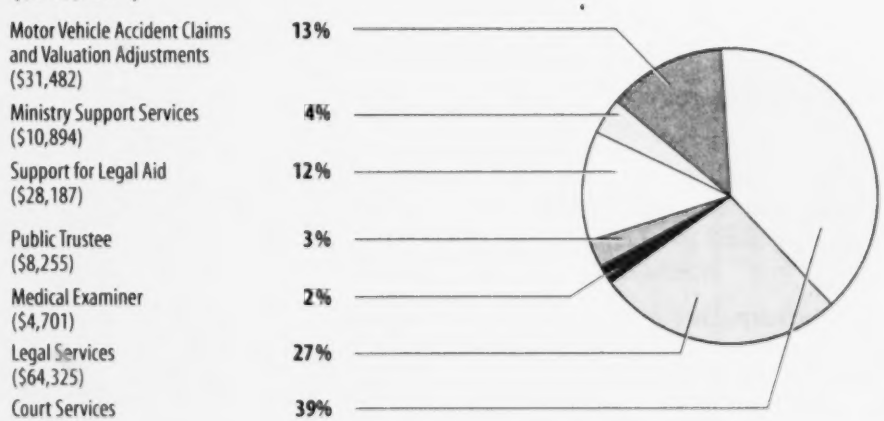
Goals	Measure	Target	Result
Promote safe communities in Alberta	Public perception of safety in the home (pg 26)	95%	In 2003, 96% of Albertans said they feel safe in their own home.
	Public perception of safety in the neighbourhood (pg 27)	80%	In 2003, 77% of Albertans said they feel comfortable walking alone at night in their neighbourhood.
Ensure victims have a more meaningful role in the criminal justice system	Client satisfaction with public assistance program (pg 29)	New measure	In Edmonton from December 2002 to January 2003, 84% of respondents said they were satisfied with the services they received from the Public Assistance Unit. In Calgary from July to December 2002, 82% of respondents said they were satisfied with the services they received from the Public Assistance Unit.
Provide access to justice services for Albertans in need	Client satisfaction with the services of the Public Trustee's Office (pg 31)	85%	In 2002/03, the client satisfaction rate was 90%.
	The amount collected on Maintenance Enforcement Program files (pg 32)	$3,125	In 2002/03, an average of $3,084 per file was collected.
	Maintenance Enforcement Program: dollars due compared to dollars received (% collected) (pg 34)	78%	In 2002/03, the Maintenance Enforcement Program achieved a 78.4% collection rate on scheduled support and scheduled arrears payments.
	Number of eligible Albertans receiving legal aid services (pg 35)	107,454	In 2002/03, 111,575 Albertans received legal aid services.
Improve access to civil and criminal justice	Median elapsed time from first to last appearance in Provincial Court (pg 36)	Canadian median (92 days)	The median elapsed time from first to last appearance was 72 days. *Note: The latest data available is for 2001/02.*
Provide effective legal services to the government of Alberta	Client satisfaction with legal services (pg 38)	90%	In 2002/03, the client satisfaction rate was 88%.

Highlights – Financial

Revenue by Source (percentage)
($102,032*)


Recoveries, Refunds, Investment Income and Other ($9,332) 9%
Public Trustee Fees and Other ($4,180) 4%
Maintenance Enforcement Act ($6,422) 6%
Federal Transfers - Legal Aid ($8,008) 8%
Other Federal Transfers ($1,363) 1%
Court Fees ($15,133) 15%
Motor Vehicle Accident Claims ($15,021) 15%
Fines, Late Payment Penalties and Surcharges ($42,573) 42%

Expenses by Program (percentage)
($240,739*)


Motor Vehicle Accident Claims and Valuation Adjustments ($31,482) 13%
Ministry Support Services ($10,894) 4%
Support for Legal Aid ($28,187) 12%
Public Trustee ($8,255) 3%
Medical Examiner ($4,701) 2%
Legal Services ($64,325) 27%
Court Services ($92,895) 39%

** Dollar amounts are shown in thousands*

Analysis of Key Activities

Alberta Justice's efforts for 2002/03 focused on building a justice system that is efficient, effective and responsive to the needs of all Albertans. Keeping our communities safe, improving access to the justice system and providing legal services to vulnerable Albertans remained high priorities.

Public consultations

Consultation on court-annexed mediation in civil cases

- Alberta Justice's consultation on court-annexed mediation in civil cases aims to develop a "made-in-Alberta" court-annexed civil mediation program.
- The consultation is a three-step process that started with a visioning session following the November 2001 conference to create possible models for future civil mediation programs.
- The second phase, completed in February 2002, consisted of facilitated discussion groups held in Calgary and Edmonton.
- In the third stage, individuals selected from the facilitated discussion groups formed a working committee in April 2002 and made recommendations to the minister about court-annexed mediation in civil cases.

Calgary Law Courts

- The Government of Alberta issued an Expression of Interest to gather ideas and options on the possibility of building new law courts in Calgary as a public-private partnership.
- The objective was to gather information and review as many options as possible for proceeding with the new law courts in Calgary.
- An Expression of Interest is used to determine the level of interest and to draw out ideas from the private sector that will assist the government in developing project requirements.
- The closing date for the Expression of Interest was August 30, 2002.

Teacher resource manual for Grade 10 Social Studies

- Alberta Justice in consultation with Alberta Learning and Alberta Solicitor General, worked with teachers from across the province to develop a teaching resource for use in Grade 10 Social Studies classes.
- Using a variety of teaching and learning activities, the manual addresses five areas of law within the Canadian judicial system: constitutional, Aboriginal, criminal, civil and youth.

- Grade 10 Social Studies teachers took part in a focus group session and a working group session to help Alberta Justice develop the resource manual.
- The resource manual was developed in response to a key theme from the Alberta Justice Summit that recommended improving public knowledge, education and awareness of Alberta's justice system.
- The resource was distributed to 625 Social Studies teachers across the province.

Program initiatives

Dispute Resolution Officer Pilot Project

- The Dispute Resolution Officer Pilot Project began on December 1, 2001 in the Calgary Court of Queen's Bench.
- The two-year pilot project requires all parents wanting to vary existing child support orders or do annual recalculations of orders to meet with a Dispute Resolution Officer (DRO) before appearing in court.
- Parties can also meet voluntarily with a DRO to conduct settlement conferences on ongoing matters or to sort out contested motions referred by a judge.
- The project has resulted in 70 per cent of its cases being resolved without going to court.

Judicial Dispute Resolution Program

- The Judicial Dispute Resolution (JDR) Pilot Project became an ongoing program in Edmonton Provincial Court, Family Division.
- JDR helps people involved in family law and child protection matters in Provincial Court resolve their concerns without the need for a trial.
- A judge assists the parties in negotiating a resolution, or if resolution is not possible, offers an opinion about what his or her decision would be if that information were heard in a trial. The judge's decision is not binding, but is provided to help the parties with their settlement negotiations.
- Results from the pilot project survey found that 87 per cent of parties who responded felt the JDR process was fair. More than 68 trial days were cancelled after JDR during the pilot project.

Small claims limit

- Alberta's small claims limit was raised to $25,000 to improve Albertan's access to justice in civil court.
- People are now able to pursue civil claims of up to $25,000 in Provincial Court, Civil Division, rather than in the Court of Queen's Bench, which has more complex procedures and generally requires a lawyer.
- The increase took effect November 1, 2002 and is the highest small claims limit in Canada.

Child-friendly courtroom

- Alberta's first comprehensive court facility for child victims opened in Edmonton Provincial Court to help children who have to testify at criminal trials.
- The child-friendly facilities consist of a waiting room with its own washroom and courtroom with a back entrance for the child.
- The facilities prevent the child victim from seeing the accused while testifying and aim to make the court process less intimidating for children.
- The courtroom and waiting room are wired with two-way communication for the rare instances where a child is unable to testify in the courtroom.
- The project was the result of a partnership between Alberta Justice, Alberta Solicitor General, the Edmonton Police Service, the Zebra Child Protection Centre and the John Howard Society's Victims' Assistance Program.

Internet crime prosecutor

- Alberta Justice appointed a full-time Crown prosecutor committed to criminal cases involving technology or the Internet.
- The Technology and Internet Crime Coordinator with Alberta Justice's Special Prosecutions Branch will be working with law enforcement investigators and prosecutors in Alberta, across Canada and internationally on technology crime cases.
- The prosecutor will take the lead on cases involving crimes committed over the Internet, computer hacking and other crimes that involve significant use of computers.
- Dedicating a full-time prosecutor to this relatively new and rapidly changing area of the law will help ensure that Alberta's prosecution service keeps pace with those who use technology for criminal activities.

Legislative and policy changes

New child support agreements with U.S. and European nations

- Reciprocal agreements enable the Maintenance Enforcement Program to collect and disburse support payments on behalf of Albertans who have support orders with someone who lives outside of the province.
- Without these agreements, valid court orders for child or spousal support cannot be enforced in either jurisdiction.
- New agreements were reached with the U.S., the Slovak Republic, the Czech Republic and the Republic of Poland.
- Alberta also has reciprocal agreements with 30 jurisdictions, including all Canadian provinces and territories, Australia, Germany, Norway, New Zealand, Austria, South Africa, and the United Kingdom.

Adult Interdependent Relationships Act

- This act was introduced in the legislature in May 2002. The legislation amends 68 Alberta laws to address the legal needs of unmarried Albertans involved in committed, interdependent relationships. The act came into force June 1, 2003.
- The act covers a range of personal relationships that fall outside the traditional institution of marriage, including committed platonic relationships where two people agree to share emotional and economic responsibilities.

Security Management Statutes Amendment Act

- This act amends 17 Alberta acts to prevent or reduce the threat of terrorist activity and enhance the province's ability to respond to emergency situations.
- The act upgrades precautions to protect the safety and security of all Albertans, and the province's infrastructure, industry, natural resources and environment.

Ombudsman Amendment Act

- This act was introduced in the legislature in March 2003.
- The proposed amendments will allow the Ombudsman to access all the information he needs to thoroughly investigate complaints about the administrative actions of provincial government departments and their associated boards and agencies.
- The Ombudsman investigates complaints of unfairness within the administration of the provincial government after all other avenues of appeal have been exhausted.

Class Proceedings Act

- The act outlines the specific process for cases involving multiple plaintiffs with similar claims against the same defendant or defendants.
- The *Class Proceedings Act* will help improve access to justice for Albertans with legitimate actions who might not pursue them because of the high cost of pursuing a case in court.
- The act is based on a model class proceedings act developed by the Uniform Law Conference of Canada and brings Alberta legislation in line with the majority of other Canadian provinces.
- The act has not been proclaimed.

Promoting change on a national level

- In November 2002, Justice Minister Dave Hancock and Solicitor General Heather Forsyth hosted the federal/provincial/territorial meeting of ministers responsible for justice in Calgary.
- Minister Hancock used the meeting to encourage the federal government to adopt stronger child pornography legislation and raise the age of consent for sexual activity from 14 to 16.
- At this meeting, Minister Hancock also pushed the federal government to amend the *Criminal Code* provisions for conditional sentences to ensure they are not used in serious violent offences, serious sexual offences (especially sexual offences against children), and offences involving death or serious bodily harm. He also led discussions on the reform of preliminary inquiries.
- Minister Hancock also led discussions on the reform of preliminary inquiries and discussed efforts to review, update and streamline the *Criminal Code* to ensure it is in step with the current issues facing our criminal justice system. This coincides with Alberta's ongoing work in the area of structural reform to ensure the justice system is as efficient and effective as possible.

A Message from the Deputy Minister

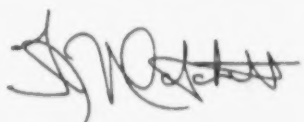
This report sets out our results in achieving the goals and strategic priorities described in the 2002-05 Ministry Business Plan. The justice system is a shared responsibility and the results described in this report reflect partnerships with other government ministries, the judiciary, the legal community, Aboriginal people and our stakeholders in policing, community organizations and local government. The efforts and involvement of committed partners and dedicated individuals is critical to the successes that are described in this annual report.

One of the key success factors over the past year has been the recognition that Alberta Justice must become a policy-driven organization in order to achieve our objectives. This has meant building on the creativity and knowledge of our employees and developing new partnerships and approaches to achieve our goals. We have taken the initial steps through the creation of a Policy Secretariat to ensure greater collaboration with stakeholders and enhancement of the policy capacity in the Ministry of Justice. In addition, a Justice Policy Advisory Committee has been established to provide advice and direction.

Through our strategic planning, we have worked to clarify the role of the ministry in ensuring safe communities, a fair and accessible justice system, and effective legal and strategic services to government. The ministry continues to strive to identify proactive and cost-effective strategies to achieve justice outcomes. Our focus over the past year has been on improving the effectiveness and efficiency of our programs and services, in order to reinvest resources in preventative strategies that will have a long-term impact on justice outcomes. Examples of these proactive strategies include the implementation of innovative court strategies to address domestic violence, alternatives for young persons with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder who come into conflict with the law, and new approaches to dispute resolution in Alberta courts. The results of these initiatives are documented in this report and clearly demonstrate the value of these investments in achieving our goals.

The ministry has also undertaken a multi-year organizational renewal project. The focus of the initiative is to identify, develop and complete projects that will improve the workplace environment, improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our operations, as well as improve service delivery and ensure the long-term sustainability of the ministry.

Through these and other initiatives, we will continue to work with our partners to make a good justice system better.



Terrence J. Matchett, Q.C.
Deputy Minister of Justice
and Deputy Attorney General
Ministry of Justice

Core Business

EXPENSE BY CORE BUSINESS

(thousands of dollars)

EXPENSE	2001/02 Actual	2002/03 Budget	2002/03 Actual
Core Business			
Courts	93,019	96,299	99,729
Legal Services to Albertans in Need	76,778	81,095	82,897
Prosecutions	32,269	36,283	36,184
Legal Services to Government	21,070	22,473	21,929
MINISTRY EXPENSE	**223,136**	**236,150**	**240,739**

Courts: provide Albertans access to the courts and other dispute resolution processes.

Legal Services to Albertans in Need: provide support and protection to some of Alberta's most vulnerable citizens, such as families who depend on court-ordered maintenance payments, individuals unable to protect their financial interests and individuals who cannot afford legal counsel.

Prosecutions: prosecute criminal and other offences, giving priority to the prosecution of serious and violent crime.

Legal Services to Government: provide legal and related strategic services to government ministries.

AUDITOR GENERAL
Alberta

Report of the Auditor General on the Results of Applying Specified Auditing Procedures to Key Performance Measures

To the Members of the Legislative Assembly:

In connection with the Ministry of Justice's performance measures included in the *2002-2003 Annual Report of the Ministry of Justice,* I have:

1. Agreed information from an external organization to reports from the organization, or where information is reported as not available, confirmed that this information is not available.

2. Agreed information from reports that originated within the Ministry to source reports. In addition, I tested the procedures used to compile the underlying data into the source reports.

3. Checked that the presentation of results is consistent with the stated methodology.

4. Checked that the results presented are comparable to stated targets, and information presented in prior years.

5. Checked that the performance measures, as well as targets, agree to and include results for all of the measures presented in Budget 2002.

As a result of applying the above procedures, I found no exceptions. These procedures, however, do not constitute an audit and therefore I express no opinion on the performance measures included in the *2002-2003 Annual Report of the Ministry of Justice.*

Fred J. Dunn FCA
Auditor General

Edmonton, Alberta
August 15, 2003

Goals and Measures

GOAL ONE **Promote safe communities in Alberta**

Albertans have told us that they want peaceful communities in which they can live, work and raise families in safety and security without fear of crime or victimization. While each goal is important, virtually everything Justice does is tested against this goal.

KEY MEASURE 1
Public Perception of Safety in the Home

PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

The vast majority of Albertans feel safe in their own home. Respondents with annual incomes over $60,000, married respondents and those respondents with a university education felt the safest. Those feeling somewhat less safe than others included victims of crime and those from middle income households.

KEY MEASURE

Public Perception of Safety in the Home	The results of the 2003 Alberta Justice and Alberta Solicitor General Public Opinion Survey indicate that 96 per cent of Albertans said they feel very safe (69 per cent) or somewhat safe (27 per cent) in their own home. This is down from 99 per cent in 2002, but exceeded this year's target of 95 per cent.

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

Safety in the home is a measure of the public's perception of the ministry's success at achieving the goal of safe communities. To be contributing members of society, Albertans must feel safe and secure in their homes and communities.

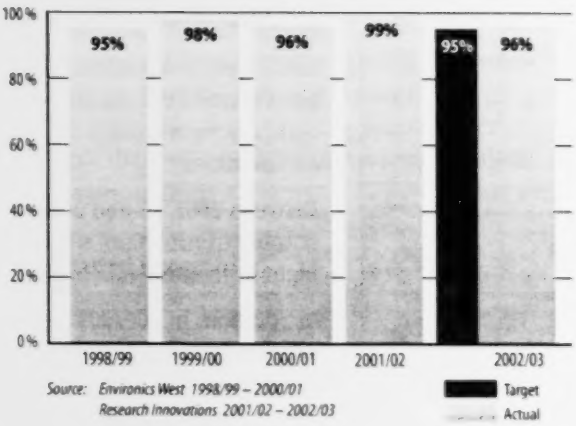
Although the 2002/03 result of 96 per cent represents a decrease from the 99 per cent achieved a year earlier, the 2003 result is generally in line with results of previous surveys.

Respondents were also asked how worried they felt about their safety from crime when alone in their home in the evening or at night. Most (73 per cent) said they were not at all worried. Only one per cent of respondents reported feeling very worried. Twenty-six per cent were somewhat worried.

GOAL ONE **Promote safe communities in Alberta**

Public Perception of Safety in the Home

The percentage of Albertans who feel "somewhat safe" to "very safe" in their own homes



For methodology related to this measure see page 75.

KEY MEASURE 2
Public Perception of Safety in the Neighbourhood

PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

Most Albertans feel comfortable walking alone at night in their neighbourhood. The respondents who felt the most comfortable were males, those with incomes over $60,000, married respondents, and those living in rural areas. Respondents identifying lower comfort levels than others included residents of Edmonton and Calgary compared to those from smaller cities, who in turn were less comfortable than those from rural areas, those from households with $20,000-$30,000 annually, victims, females and singles.

KEY MEASURE

Public Perception of Safety in the Neighbourhood

The results of the 2002/03 Alberta Justice and Alberta Solicitor General Public Opinion Survey indicate that 77 per cent of Albertans said they are very (48 per cent) or somewhat (29 per cent) comfortable walking alone at night in their neighbourhood. This represents a decrease from the 81 per cent achieved in 2001/02. The target for this year was 80 per cent.

GOAL ONE **Promote safe communities in Alberta**

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

Like safety in the home, safety in the neighbourhood is a measure of the public's perception of the ministry's success at achieving our goal of safe communities. To be contributing members of society, Albertans must feel safe and secure in their homes and communities.

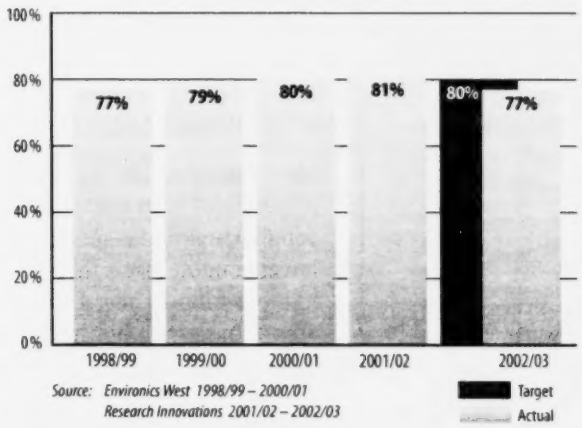
Between 2001/02 and 2002/03 there was a decline from 81 per cent to 77 per cent in the number of Albertans who say they feel very or somewhat comfortable walking alone at night in their neighbourhoods.

In addition, in 2002/03 there was a small increase from 2001/02 in the percentage of Albertans who believe that crime in their neighbourhood has increased (to 34 per cent from 31 per cent). This figure is still down significantly from the 42 per cent in 2000/01.

Public perception of safety is strongly influenced by media coverage of crime and current events.

Public Perception of Safety in the Neighbourhood

The percentage of Albertans who feel "somewhat comfortable" to "very comfortable" walking alone at night in their neighbourhood



Source: Environics West 1998/99 – 2000/01
Research Innovations 2001/02 – 2002/03

For methodology related to this measure see page 75.

GOAL TWO **Ensure victims have a more meaningful role in the criminal justice system**

Recognizing the needs of the victim in the criminal justice system helps restore the balance of society in a humane and fair way, and is an important goal of our justice system. Helping victims achieve closure is an essential part of restoring their feeling of safety in the community. Alberta Justice is committed to providing effective services to victims of crime and expanding the role of the victim in the criminal justice system.

KEY MEASURE 1
Client Satisfaction with Public Assistance Program

PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

The majority of individuals sampled who accessed the Edmonton and Calgary public assistance units were satisfied with the services they received.

KEY MEASURE

Client Satisfaction with Public Assistance Program	In Edmonton from December 2002 to January 2003, overall 84 per cent of respondents indicated that they were satisfied with the services they received from the Public Assistance Unit. In Calgary from July to December 2002, overall 82 per cent of respondents indicated that they were satisfied with the services they received from the Public Assistance Unit.

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

This is a new key measure.

An important way of assisting victims to have a more meaningful role in the criminal justice system is through the services of the public assistance units in Edmonton and Calgary. Activities of the public assistance units include: providing case specific information and general information about the criminal justice system to victims of crime, refering victims to a variety of community-based services and providing a link between victims and Crown prosecutors.

Most of the individuals who accessed the Edmonton and Calgary public assistance units during the specified time period were satisfied with the services they received.

Edmonton and Calgary public assistance units are each staffed by two persons who provide assistance to victims of crime, witnesses, prosecutors, lawyers and the general public. Clients served by the Edmonton and Calgary units differ. Calgary serves primarily victims of crime, while Edmonton's primary users are individuals employed within the criminal justice system or other stakeholders. Most of Edmonton's respondents heard about the Public Assistance Unit during the course of their employment while Calgary's users were referred to the Public Assistance Unit through another agency. An equal number of males and females accessed the unit in Edmonton, while in Calgary, the Public Assistance Unit served a significantly larger proportion of females than males.

In Edmonton, overall 94 per cent of respondents indicated that the information they were provided was easy to understand. Similarly in Calgary, overall 91 per cent of respondents indicated that the information they were provided was easy to understand.

For methodology related to this measure see page 76.

GOAL THREE **Provide access to justice services for Albertans in need**

Albertans require access to a broad range of justice services including courts, prosecutorial services and appropriate dispute resolution mechanisms. In addition, services such as maintenance enforcement, estate and trust administration services, victim assistance and legal aid are an important part of preserving a safe society for Albertans where justice prevails.

KEY MEASURE 1
Client Satisfaction with the Services of the Public Trustee's Office

PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

The vast majority of clients were satisfied with the services provided by the Public Trustee's Office.

KEY MEASURE

Client Satisfaction with the Services of the Public Trustee's Office	In 2002/03, the satisfaction rate of those clients responding to the survey was 90 per cent. This is down from 91 per cent in 2001/02, but exceeded this year's target of 85 per cent.

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

This measure is used to monitor how well the Public Trustee's Office provides its services, and is one measure indicating access to justice services for persons in need.

This measure is a composite of responses to various questions relating to satisfaction of responsiveness and quality of services provided. It is used to monitor how well the Public Trustee's Office provides its services, to improve services to clients and to establish policies and procedures where deficiencies are noted.

The Public Trustee's Office protects and administers the property of dependent adults, minor children and deceased persons where there is no one else able to act.

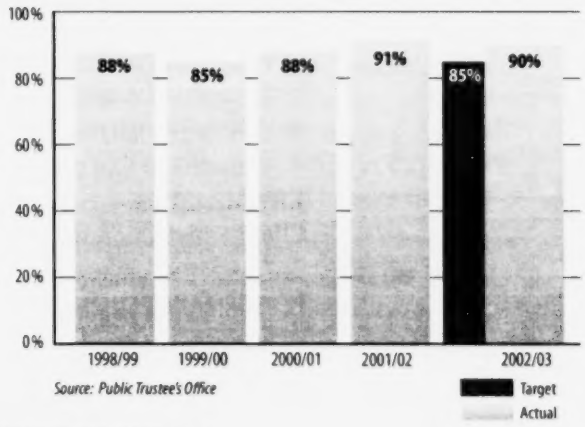
An aging population has an impact on the number of trust accounts under administration. For the year ended March 31, 2003, the number of trust accounts being administered increased by 2.3 per cent over March 31, 2002.

More information on the activities of the Office of the Public Trustee is available in the program's annual report, which can be obtained from the Office of the Public Trustee.

GOAL THREE **Provide access to justice services for Albertans in need**

Client Satisfaction with the Services of the Public Trustee's Office

The percentage of clients "satisfied" to "very satisfied" with the services of the Public Trustee's Office



For methodology related to this measure see page 77.

KEY MEASURE 2
The Amount Collected on Maintenance Enforcement Program Files

PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

The Maintenance Enforcement Program collected an average $3,084 per file in 2002/03.

KEY MEASURE

The Amount Collected on Maintenance Enforcement Program Files	In 2002/03, the Maintenance Enforcement Program averaged collections of $3,084 per file. This is down from $3,106 in 2001/02 and is slightly less than the targeted average collections per file of $3,125.

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

The amount collected per file is a measure of the ministry's success in assisting Albertans in need, especially children.

The primary objective of the Alberta Maintenance Enforcement Program (MEP) is to collect court-ordered maintenance for creditors. MEP is authorized by the Alberta *Maintenance Enforcement Act* to collect child and spousal maintenance granted by the courts. MEP can also enforce certain types of maintenance agreements.

GOAL THREE **Provide access to justice services for Albertans in need**

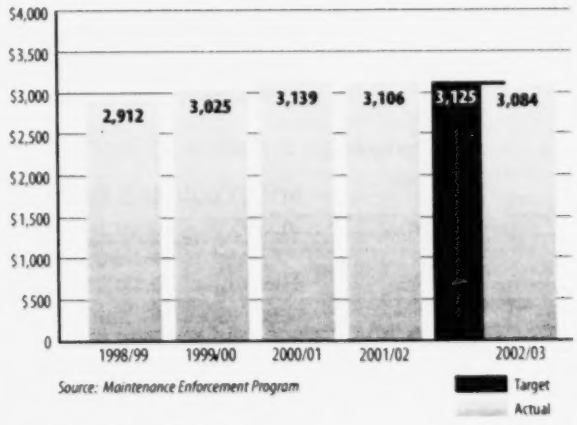
Factors outside MEP's control influence the program's success at collections. These include inaccessibility of the debtor and/or the debtor's resources, court ordered stays of enforcement, and termination of the debtor's income due to unemployment, disability or incarceration.

As well, the robust Alberta economy is attracting a substantial number of newcomers to the province, which is increasing the program's caseload.

In addition, due to a hiring freeze, vacant positions within the program could not be filled.

The Amount Collected on Maintenance Enforcement Program Files

The dollars collected per file by the Maintenance Enforcement Program



Source: Maintenance Enforcement Program

For methodology related to this measure see page 77.

GOAL THREE **Provide access to justice services for Albertans in need**

KEY MEASURE 3
Maintenance Enforcement Program: Dollars Due Compared to Dollars Received (per cent collected)

PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

The Maintenance Enforcement Program achieved a 78.4 per cent collection rate on scheduled support and scheduled arrears payments.

KEY MEASURE

Maintenance Enforcement Program: Dollars Due Compared to Dollars Received (per cent collected)	In 2002/03, the Maintenance Enforcement Program achieved a 78.4 per cent collection rate, satisfying the target of 78 per cent.

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

This is a new key measure.

The MEP collection rate is a measure of the ministry's success in assisting Albertans in need, especially children.

For the measure, dollars due compared to dollars received, the Maintenance Enforcement Program (MEP) exceeded the target.

MEP places emphasis on client service, administrative fairness and staff training to assist with voluntary compliance and, when needed, negotiated settlements of delinquent accounts. In addition, MEP has a number of legislative tools and clear guidelines regarding their use, that are employed effectively to enforce maintenance orders and to assist in achieving compliance.

MEP collects court-ordered amounts and is subject to the quantum established by the courts.

For methodology related to this measure see page 77.

GOAL THREE **Provide access to justice services for Albertans in need**

KEY MEASURE 4
Number of Eligible Albertans Receiving Legal Aid Services

PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

In 2002/03, more Albertans than ever before received legal aid services.

KEY MEASURE

Number of Eligible Albertans Receiving Legal Aid Services	In 2002/03, 111,575 Albertans received legal aid services. This is up from 101,577 in 2001/02 and exceeds the target of 107,454.

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

The number of eligible Albertans receiving legal aid services is a measure of the ministry's success in assisting Albertans in need.

Of the total Albertans who received legal aid services in 2002/03, 42,052 were issued certificates, while duty counsel services accounted for 69,523.

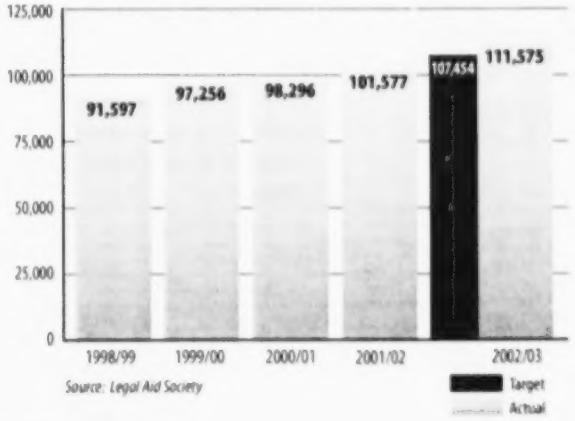
The number of persons served is dependent on demand, the number of persons who seek the assistance of Duty Counsel, and the numbers who apply for full coverage.

Some factors that influence the number of applications are changes in police charging practices, legislation and population growth.

Funding for the Legal Aid Society has been increased to keep pace with increases in demand as well as incremental increases in the Legal Aid Tariff.

Number of Eligible Albertans Receiving Legal Aid Services

The number of eligible persons receiving legal aid services



For methodology related to this measure see page 77.

GOAL FOUR **Improve access to civil and criminal justice**

The justice system is responsible for providing the infrastructure to resolve criminal and civil disputes. This includes the provision of court resources, scheduling mechanisms, prosecutorial services and appropriate dispute resolution mechanisms. Where appropriate, mediation, judicial dispute resolution and mini-trials are used as alternatives to the traditional court process, and by speeding up the process and lowering costs, they can improve access.

Key Measure 1
Median Elapsed Time from First to Last Appearance

PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

In 2001/02, Alberta's median elapsed time from first to last appearance was 72 days for provincial court.

KEY MEASURE

Median Elapsed Time from First to Last Appearance	The most recent data available is for 2001/02, and indicates that the median elapsed time from first to last appearance is 72 days for provincial court. The ministry exceeded our target for that year, which was to meet the Canadian median of 92 days. For the previous year (2000/01), the median elapsed time in Alberta was 75 days.

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

The ministry must ensure that there is access to the courts in a reasonable amount of time.

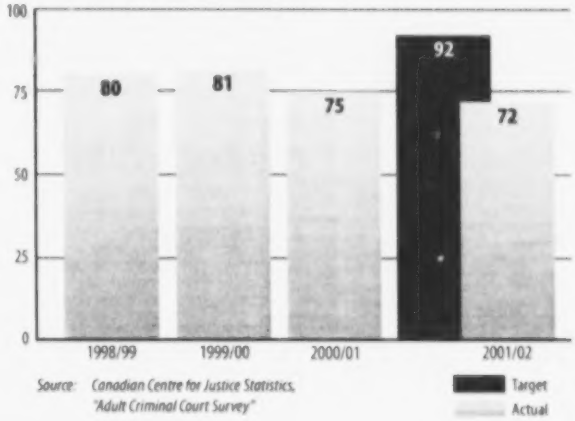
Median elapsed time from first to last appearance represents the midpoint in the time elapsed between the first and last appearance for all cases processed in provincial court.

The decrease in median elapsed time from 2000/01 may be largely attributed to the ministry's early case resolution initiatives. In addition, there were 722 fewer cases in 2001/02 than 2000/01, which is likely to have contributed to the lower median elapsed time.

GOAL FOUR **Improve access to civil and criminal justice**

Median Elapsed Time from First to Last Appearance

The median elapsed time in days that it takes to process a case in Provincial Criminal Court from first to last appearance



Source: *Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, "Adult Criminal Court Survey"*

For methodology related to this measure see page 78.

GOAL FIVE **Provide effective legal services to the government of Alberta**

The government performs a number of roles as service provider, community partner and lawmaker. These roles involve relationships with individuals, families, communities, businesses and other governments. Effective legal services reduce the potential for conflict involving the government and protect and advance the interests of the government. By providing effective legal and related strategic services, Justice assists other ministries in achieving their objectives.

Key Measure 1
Client Satisfaction with Legal Services

PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

The vast majority of client ministries were satisfied with the legal services provided by Alberta Justice.

KEY MEASURE

Client Satisfaction with Legal Services	Eighty-eight per cent of clients surveyed responded that they were either "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with legal services provided. This represents a significant increase from the 81 per cent result in 2001/02. The target for 2002/03 was a 90 per cent satisfaction rating.

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

This measure indicates the level of client satisfaction among government clients who use the services of the Legal Services Division.

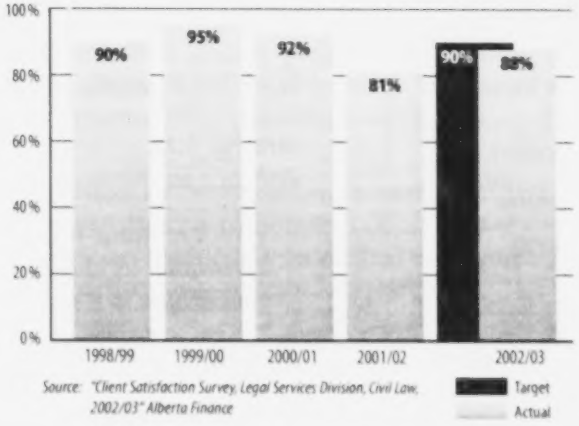
The 90 per cent target for client satisfaction with legal services was set prior to 2001/02 and 2002/03. Significant methodological changes were made in each of these years that impacted the measure's results. This led to results being below targets for two years. Despite this, between 2001/02 and 2002/03, the measure showed a seven per cent improvement in results.

The results of the survey are used to assist Alberta Justice in assessing success at delivering effective legal services to government. When clients were asked how satisfied they were that the legal services provided has helped them achieve their department's goal, 86 per cent responded that they were either "satisfied" or "very satisfied" that this was the case.

GOAL FIVE **Provide effective legal services to the government of Alberta**

Client Satisfaction with Legal Services

The per cent of clients "satisfied" to "very satisfied" with the legal services provided by Alberta Justice



Source: "Client Satisfaction Survey, Legal Services Division, Civil Law, 2002/03" Alberta Finance

For methodology related to this measure see page 79.

Goals, Strategies and Accomplishments

The 2002-05 Alberta Justice Business Plan outlined numerous strategies under five goals. Outlined below are our 2002/03 achievements toward these strategies.

GOAL ONE **Promote safe communities in Alberta**

Strategy 1.1
Enhance our focus on serious and violent crime:

Work with the R.C.M.P., Calgary Police Service and other involved agencies, providing legal advice and assistance with planning and training to contribute to a safe G8 Summit.

In order to facilitate planning for the G8 Summit at Kananaskis June 2002, a senior prosecutor was seconded to work full-time with the Chief Superintendent of the RCMP responsible for G8 security. In addition, four Crown prosecutors from the Calgary Crown Prosecutors Office were assigned to G8 during the Summit. These Crown prosecutors provided legal training to police officers and others on powers of arrest, search and seizure, and various offences that might be encountered. Training was provided to Calgary Police Service members, members of the RCMP, mutual aid partners, University of Calgary security officers, Canadian Pacific police officers, and park rangers.

A handbook and a training video were developed for future use. Four other Crown prosecutors were members of the Police Advisory Committee (PAC) and provided legal opinions/advice on strategic questions related to security arrangements and police powers. PAC included legal officers from Alberta Justice, Justice Canada, the military and enforcement agencies. During the G8 Summit, PAC was available on a 24-hour basis to provide legal advice on police tactical questions. In addition, the Calgary Crown Prosecutors Office was available on a 24-hour basis to provide advice on prosecutorial questions.

Fortunately, there were no problems during G8, however, the result could have been much different had the level of preparation been lower.

Develop a provincial impaired driving enforcement strategy, in conjunction with Alberta Solicitor General, Alberta Transportation, and police agencies.

The Impaired Driving Steering Committee, composed of representatives from the major policing agencies in Alberta, Alberta Justice, Alberta Transportation plus members from PAID, MADD and SADD, was created to develop a provincial Three-Year Business Plan for Impaired Driving Enforcement which included an annual provincial enforcement strategy. The committee provided input to the various agencies regarding policing practices, advertising campaigns and enforcement and legislative approaches to the issue of impaired driving. There was also a working group composed of prosecutors and policing agencies who were mandated to educate both prosecutors and policing agencies about the approaches and methods used to address problems which arise in the enforcement and prosecution of impaired driving cases.

The working committee prepared a report in September 2002, which is currently under review entitled: *"Enforcement of Impaired Driving in Alberta – An Overview and Strategic Direction".*

Develop and implement the organized crime strategy (which would include the proposed terrorism offences), including working with Justice Canada on a proposal for a joint organized crime/terrorism prosecution team, in conjunction with stakeholders.

At present, most organized crime investigations and large-scale prosecutions in Alberta are drug focused and within the prosecutorial mandate of the federal Department of Justice. The recently introduced federal anti-terrorism legislation creates new offences and processes that will require additional prosecutorial expertise and resources.

Alberta Justice is working with Criminal Intelligence Service Alberta (CISA) and the federal Department of Justice to discuss ways of increasing Alberta Justice's prosecutorial involvement.

Organize and host a bi-national economic crime workshop in 2002.

The Economic Crime Workshop was held April 15-18, 2002, and included over 100 delegates representing federal, state and provincial law enforcement and prosecution services from across Canada and the United States. The workshop produced numerous outcomes, including:

- A greater understanding by the Americans of the Canadian criminal justice system and vice versa – understanding the strengths and weaknesses of the two systems.
- Establishing cross-border partnerships to better investigate and prosecute economic crime.
- Developing information sharing protocols between US and Canadian jurisdictions to speed up cross-border investigations and prosecutions.
- Sharing experiences regarding the types of cross border economic crime cases that are being committed and the ones posing the greatest potential threat of harm to citizens of both countries.
- Solidifying a commitment on both sides of the border to assist one another in solving cross-border crime.

Strategy 1.2
Work with Alberta Solicitor General, Justice Canada and other stakeholders to develop guidelines, business processes, information technology, and provide training to ensure effective prosecution of new legislation, including:

- ***Youth Criminal Justice Act***
- ***Proposed Criminal Code amendments (Bill C-15), which include offences relating to child pornography and luring.***

The ***Youth Criminal Justice Act*** *(YCJA)*, which came into effect April 1, 2003, replaced the *Young Offenders Act* as the federal criminal statute dealing with young persons.

Representatives from Alberta Justice, Alberta Solicitor General, and police services participated on various subcommittees to develop plans and policies to address all aspects of implementing the new *YCJA*. All steps necessary to implement the *YCJA* were completed by April 1, 2003, however, implementation of the *YCJA* will require follow-up work to monitor results and adapt to court interpretation of the *YCJA*.

Bill C-15 is a criminal justice omnibus bill containing both procedural and substantive changes. Most noteworthy are the procedural changes dealing with preliminary inquiries and substantive changes to the law involving impaired driving.

While the first three stages of the bill were implemented successfully by summer 2002, Bill C-15A is scheduled to come into force in four stages. It makes procedural and substantive law changes to the *Criminal Code*. An inter-divisional committee was formed to implement the bill. The first three stages were child pornography, plea inquiry and impaired driving. The final stage of the bill (preliminary inquiry reform and limitation on use of agents) is scheduled to come into force on December 1, 2003.

Strategy 1.3
Promote culturally sensitive approaches to prosecutions including:

Enhance Aboriginal Awareness programs and improve staff access to them.

A three-phase Aboriginal Cultural Understanding training strategy has been developed.

All Crown prosecutors, with the exception of some new employees hired in late 2002, have completed Phase I Aboriginal Cultural Awareness Training at the Justice/Solicitor General Staff College and 19 Crown prosecutors participated in the Phase II, four day First Nation cultural camp, in September 2002.

A committee was established to plan and deliver the curriculum for Phase III Aboriginal training. This phase will focus on the legal issues related to dealing with Aboriginal people in court, for example, the *Gladue* decision.

Strategy 1.4

Develop innovative court strategies to address domestic violence, including:

Develop an Edmonton domestic violence court in conjunction with the judiciary and other stakeholders.

The Edmonton Crown Prosecutors Office worked with Assistant Chief Judge P.M. Caffaro to establish a specialized trial court to hear domestic violence cases. Since January 2002 all domestic violence cases (violence by one partner to another) in Edmonton are scheduled in one dedicated courtroom and handled by one of three Crown prosecutors who prosecute these cases exclusively.

The Family Protection Unit, consisting of the domestic violence and the child protection units, formalized its docket court proposal and is awaiting approval and a start date from Assistant Chief Judge Caffaro.

Two Edmonton Crown prosecutors spoke at the Family Violence Conference in Edmonton on November 28-29, 2002. "The Edmonton Domestic Violence Court - One Year Later" was presented in cooperation with three EPS personnel, which reflected the collaborative nature of the work. In preparation for the presentation, input was gathered from the bench, the defence bar and victim services workers.

The Domestic Violence Unit has achieved much value by liaising with the Victim's Assistance Program of the John Howard Society and the Victim's Services Unit in the prosecutor's office. These essential programs help keep victims on side and obtain information to assist in determining the position of victims. Obtaining better evidence such as 911 audiotapes often results from this information.

Participate in and support the Calgary Domestic Violence Intake Court project.

Through the efforts of community agencies in Calgary, the Calgary Domestic Violence Intake Court began operations in June 2000. The court handles first appearances and guilty pleas, while cases proceeding to trial are heard in other courts in Calgary.

The Calgary Crown Prosecutors Office has dedicated two Crown prosecutors to the domestic violence court on a full-time basis. In addition, several prosecutors sit on community committees associated with the project.

The Calgary Crown Prosecutors Office continues to be actively involved in HomeFront, which is the non-Government agency involved with the Calgary Domestic Violence Intake Court. There are three evaluations being conducted with respect to the Domestic Violence Intake Court. The Alberta Mental Health Board is currently conducting an evaluation on the impact of treatment being offered out of the Domestic Violence Intake Court. RESOLVE/Synergy is currently conducting a project evaluation. Results are expected in May 2004. A jurisdictional comparative evaluation is being conducted of the Edmonton Domestic Violence Trial Court, Regina provincial court and Winnipeg provincial court with a specialized domestic violence intake and trial court and the Domestic Violence Intake Court in Calgary. Interim results of this evalutaion are expected in September 2003.

Review police and prosecution domestic violence policy with the Federal/ Provincial/ Territorial Working Group.

In September 2000, federal and provincial ministers responsible for justice discussed the criminal justice system's response to spousal abuse, including making this response stronger as well as more sensitive to the needs and realities of victims of spousal abuse. They supported the establishment of an ad hoc F/P/T Working Group to review the implementation and status of mandatory charging and prosecutorial policies related to spousal abuse and to report back to the ministers. The Ad Hoc Working Group Reviewing Spousal Abuse Policies and Legislation was established and completed a cross Canada review of the status of mandatory charging and prosecutorial policies related to spousal abuse. On November 4, 2002, representatives from the Ad Hoc Working Group presented the Spousal Abuse Working Group Report to the Ministers responsible for Justice. The *Final Report of the Ad Hoc Federal-Provincial-Territorial Working Group Reviewing Spousal Abuse Policies and Legislation* was released in early 2003.

Ongoing involvement with the interdepartmental committee on family violence to optimize effective use of the Protection Against Family Violence Act.

Alberta Justice was responsible for the development of the *Protection Against Family Violence Act* and in conjunction with the Interdepartmental Committee on Family Violence, has been instrumental in the implementation of the act and its ongoing monitoring and coordination. The interdepartmental committee provides a co-ordinated response to family violence, which enhances the effective use of the act. In 2002/03, training to victim services workers, court staff, Crown prosecutors and police in Calgary, Fort McMurray, Grande Prairie and Lethbridge was provided.

A number of specialized courts were piloted in Calgary and Edmonton. The Calgary Domestic Violence Intake Court was established in May 2000 and the project continues to operate as planned. The judiciary, prosecution service and probation have dedicated staff to this court. The future of this court project and possible expansion to other jurisdictions in Alberta will be dependent on the evaluations currently underway.

In Edmonton, all domestic violence cases (violence by one partner to another) are taking place in one dedicated courtroom and handled by one of three prosecutors who prosecute these cases exclusively. This courtroom has been operational since January 2002. Very positive reviews of the domestic violence court project have been received, and during the second quarter of 2003/04, the Edmonton Crown Prosecutors Office will merge the Domestic Violence Unit and the Child Protection Unit to create the Family Protection Unit.

Strategy 1.5

Explore an alternative means of dealing more effectively with young persons in conflict with the law who suffer from Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS), in conjunction with stakeholders in the Lethbridge project.

In February 2000, the Lethbridge Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Committee was created to focus on FAS issues in the justice system. Committee members represent the police, prosecution, probation, defence bar, two school boards, the medical profession, Aboriginal people and provincial and municipal agencies involved with child welfare issues.

A process was established to identify those cases in which the needs of society for protection and the needs of the FAS sufferer for support can be met by early intervention and deployment of community resources to provide a daily living plan for the youth as part of any criminal justice system outcome required by the nature of the case.

Today, both the Lethbridge and Lakeland FAS committees are fully operational. The Lethbridge Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Community Justice Committee is operating with members from several agencies including the Lethbridge Crown Prosecutors Office. Appropriate FAS offenders are diverted or participate in treatment arranged through Community Corrections, Alberta Solicitor General. The Lakeland FAS Adult Diagnosis Team has completed its first year of diagnostic clinics. The team has members from several agencies including the Crown prosecutors offices.

On November 1-2, 2002, 10 members of the Calgary Crown Prosecutors Office participated in FAS training sponsored by the Calgary Police Service.

GOAL TWO **Ensure victims have a more meaningful role in the criminal justice system**

Strategy 2.1
Identify and implement best practices that assist child victims of crime in conjunction with stakeholders in support of the government's cross ministry Alberta Children and Youth Initiative:

- ***Pilot a child protection prosecution unit in the Edmonton Crown Office***
- ***Explore a protocol to fast track child victim of crime cases with the judiciary and Court Services***
- ***Explore the development of child friendly facilities, including courtrooms and interview rooms***
- ***Work with Alberta Solicitor General to enhance court preparation for children.***

Child victims and witnesses require more attention from the criminal justice system to ensure that they are not re-traumatized by the criminal court process. Specific initiatives were identified to improve the experience of children as they move through the court portion of the criminal justice system.

One Edmonton courtroom has been dedicated to child protection cases. A furnished child-friendly waiting room and child-friendly courtroom were officially opened on December 9, 2002. Two Crown prosecutors in the Edmonton office are dedicated to prosecutions involving child victims since August 2001. Fast tracking child protection cases was accomplished by using the dedicated courtroom in Edmonton. Additionally, a child-friendly waiting room has opened in Medicine Hat Provincial Court.

Participate in the review being conducted by the federal Department of Justice of the role of children in the justice system.

In November 1999 Justice Canada released a consultation paper on child victims and the criminal justice system involving the creation of child specific criminal offences, sentencing to protect children, improving the experience of child witnesses and facilitating their testimony in criminal proceedings. Alberta Justice and Alberta Children's Services sent a joint response letter to Justice Canada on June 19, 2000. Justice Canada then requested the assistance of both departments in conducting consultations and a regional roundtable with those involved in the child welfare and criminal justice systems in Alberta. Roundtable consultations with physicians, Crown prosecutors, police, child welfare workers and other interested professionals took place on July 12, 2001.

Federal legislation, Bill C-20, was introduced to amend the *Criminal Code* and the *Canada Evidence Act* in areas of new child sex offences, child pornography, abandoning a child, protection of a child witness, support persons for witnesses under 18 years old, cross examination by accused of witness under 18 years old, video recorded evidence, and capacity to testify. Bill C-20 has received first reading.

Strategy 2.2

Facilitate joint sessions between community victim service agencies and Crown offices to enhance awareness of victim needs.

By way of follow-up to the Justice Summit recommendations related to training for Crown prosecutors on victim's issues and providing a more meaningful role for victims in the criminal justice system, Alberta Justice and Alberta Solicitor General developed a victim awareness-training program that could be delivered at various sites around the province. To date, each chief Crown prosecutor has hosted at least one program.

This initiative has successfully provided staff in Crown prosecutors offices and victim service agencies with information about each other's responsibilities and realities, and in providing opportunities for facilitated discussions on local issues of interest to all participants. For the second successive year, grant funding has been secured from the Federal Victims Fund to assist in covering the cost of hosting the sessions.

Strategy 2.3

Develop guidelines, business processes and provide training to support the implementation of proposed legislation expanding the powers of the court to assist victims who have suffered a loss of property as a result of an illegal act.

The *Victims Compensation and Restitution Payment Act* was introduced at the fall 2001 sitting of the Legislature. The first part of the act allows the court to order that property obtained by the commission of certain illegal acts be taken away from those responsible for committing the illegal acts and returned to the victims of those acts whether or not the person responsible for the illegal act has been charged or convicted. Where the victims are unknown, the property will be liquidated and paid to the Victims of Crime Fund for the benefit of victims generally.

The second part of the act applies only where a person has been convicted of an offence under the *Criminal Code* or certain other statutes. If the court convicting the offender made a restitution order, the act allows for a summary procedure enabling the court to inquire as to the ability of the offender to pay restitution and to immediately order that property of the offender be turned over to the victim up to the value of the restitution order. Where the court determines that the offender profited by the commission of the offence and there is no restitution order, the court may order the offender to pay the profit earned by the offence directly into the Victims of Crime Fund for the benefit of victims generally.

The *Victims Compensation and Restitution Payment Act* is being implemented in stages with Part 2 being implemented first.

Strategy 2.4

Continue to enhance public assistance services across the province, including:

> ***Pilot a partnership between the Calgary Crown Public Assistance Unit and the Calgary Police Service Victim Assistance Unit to share volunteer resources to communicate with victims of crime.***

The Calgary Public Assistance Unit (PAU) maintains regular contact with the Calgary Police Victim Assistance Unit (VAU) and provides training to its volunteers. However, a number of issues related to sharing voluteer resources have created barriers. To date, these issues have not been adequately addressed to enable a sharing of volunteer resources.

Two other proposals are outstanding. There is a proposal for a victim assistance court preparation program in the proposed Calgary court that would see services to victims of crime and members of the public provided from a PAU location in a new court.

The Calgary Family Advocacy Centre has put forward a proposal that would merge various agencies under one roof, streamlining services to victims. The proposed Family Advocacy Centre would include one public assistance staff and one Crown prosecutor.

At this time, no decisions have been made on either proposal.

GOAL THREE **Provide access to justice services for Albertans in need**

Strategy 3.1

Monitor the operation and evaluation of the Family Law Staff Counsel Pilot Project to serve legal aid recipients.

The Family Law Staff Counsel Pilot Project was one of the major components of the new tri-party (Legal Aid Society, Law Society, and Alberta Justice) legal aid agreement reached in February 2001. Legal Aid commenced the project in Edmonton in June 2001 and in Calgary in October 2001.

The project utilizes staff lawyers to provide legal aid services to eligible applicants in the family law area – initiatives were developed which are responsive to the special needs of family law clients such as mediation and other alternative disputes resolution processes.

The project continues to operate successfully and is in the process of being evaluated by an independent evaluator retained by the Legal Aid Society. Expected completion date for the evaluation report is fall 2004.

Strategy 3.2

Continue provision of services through the Family Law Information Centre.

The Family Law Information Centres were set up to provide information to the public in response to the creation of the Child Support Guidelines. This service will continue to help Albertans to determine appropriate levels of child support under the Child Support Guidelines in a straightforward way, which makes it very easy for parties to deal with issues in dispute. The centres also provide information booklets on applications respecting custody, access and child support. Through pilot programs in Calgary and Edmonton, the Family Law Information Centres (FLIC) provide a dispute resolution officer service, which assists parties in resolving child support and other issues before going to court.

Strategy 3.3

Continue to deliver high quality Parenting After Separation courses on dealing with and resolving conflicts to parents who are involved in the family court process.

Parenting After Separation courses were begun under the leadership of Madam Justice Marguarite Trussler and Alberta Justice. They have been delivered across the province for approximately seven years. Resources have recently been reallocated so that courses may be offered in four new centres: Drayton Valley, Jasper, Lloydminster and Slave Lake. With the assistance of a federal grant, parents who are still together will be encouraged to attend the courses. An expansion of the course for parents who have never been married is also being developed, with the assistance of federal funds. It is anticipated that the highest need for this course will be in Edmonton and Calgary.

Posters promoting the course have been distributed to schools, community service agencies and other sites throughout the province. In 2002-03, Alberta Justice partnered with community agencies to make the course available in two additional locations. Alberta Justice provides materials and security; the agencies cover the cost of facilitators.

Strategy 3.4

Participate with the Legal Aid Society of Alberta and other provincial/territorial ministries of justice and legal aid plans in research being conducted by the federal Department of Justice to examine the extent of unmet needs in criminal legal aid and investigate the pressures and priority issues in civil legal aid.

Justice Canada, with the assistance of the provincial/territorial ministries of justice and their respective Legal Aid plans, has conducted research to examine the extent of unmet needs in criminal legal aid and investigate the pressures and priority issues in civil legal aid. It is expected that the results of the completed research will be of assistance to both levels of government in establishing the funding needs of legal aid.

The various consultants engaged by Justice Canada have completed 19 reports, which are in the process of being translated. Expectation is that translation will be completed in fall 2003 and then Justice Canada will be making the reports publicly available.

Strategy 3.5

Modernize and recommend amendments to the Public Trustee Act, including amendments to address the impact of the prudent investor rule.

The amendments to the *Trustee Act*, which came into force on February 1, 2002, replaced the legal list of approved investments with prudent investor legislation. As a result of those changes to the *Trustee Act*, the *Public Trustee Act* must be changed and since it has not been completely reviewed since its inception in 1949, the *Public Trustee Act* will be thoroughly reviewed and revised to ensure it continues to meet the needs of Albertans.

In 2002, the office of the Public Trustee conducted a detailed internal review of the *Public Trustee Act* and other legislation that prescribes the mandate of the Public Trustee.

Following that review, Public Trustee personnel distributed a consultation document to individuals and organizations that have a professional interest in various aspects of Public Trustee operations. In January 2003, a consultant conducted two focus group sessions to provide Public Trustee staff with further input on problematic areas. A second consultant has been retained to provide advice regarding the feasibility of a potential alternative funding model for the Office of the Public Trustee. Public Trustee personnel are currently working on detailed proposals for legislation to be introduced in the fall 2003 sitting of the Legislature.

Strategy 3.6
Complete the design phase and begin the construction phase of the new Maintenance Information Management System to improve communications with clients and stakeholders.

In 1998, the MLA Review of the Maintenance Enforcement Program and Child Access was released. This major review made 41 recommendations about the Maintenance Enforcement Program (MEP), many of which directly or indirectly addressed aging business and information technology systems. Included was the replacement of an outdated computer information system with new technology. In late 1999, MEP contracted with a private contractor to conduct a business review process and recommend areas for improvement. Following completion of the business review process, the new web-based Maintenance Information Management System (MIMS) was designed. The MIMS design phase was completed in March 2002 and the construction phase has begun. Upon completion in fall 2004, MIMS will provide staff with enhanced workflow management, and clients and stakeholders with improved access to information and communications with MEP.

Strategy 3.7
Enhance the Maintenance Enforcement Program (MEP) web-based technology.

The Maintenance Enforcement Program (MEP) offers clients the convenience of accessing their account information 24 hours a day, seven days a week through MEP's worldwide service *MEP Accounts Online.*

Enhancements to the web service include the introduction of "text chat" to allow clients to ask staff questions and receive an immediate answer via e-mail, automatic routing of client e-mail to the unit responsible for the file, client ability to leave a phone message for staff directly from the *MEP Accounts Online* web page, and collaborative web browsing allowing staff to take control of the client's web browser and direct them to exact areas of the web. These enhancements have proven popular with MEP's clients and provide staff with additional effective case management tools.

Strategy 3.8
Facilitate best practices in MEP business interactions with other Canadian jurisdictions through support for reciprocal enforcement legislation proposed by first ministers.

At their annual conference in August 2001, Canada's premiers each committed to passing a uniform bill entitled the *Interjurisdictional Support Orders Act (ISO)* in their respective legislatures by August 2002. Alberta introduced this bill in the spring 2002 sitting of the Legislature. The act is intended to simplify the process of obtaining and varying support orders where the creditor and debtor live in different Canadian jurisdictions. The *ISO Act* eliminates the hearing in the applicant's jurisdiction, and the provisional order that would be granted, by substituting a support application, including sworn documents, for consideration at a court hearing in the respondent's jurisdiction. The support order is then made or varied in the respondent's jurisdiction.

The act was passed by the Legislature in spring 2002 and was proclaimed on January 31, 2003. Procedures arising from the new act were prepared and implemented in consultation with other jurisdictions and affected Alberta stakeholders.

Strategy 3.9
Develop a public education strategy, including partnerships with community organizations, to enhance knowledge of MEP programs and procedures.

The MLA Review of the Maintenance Enforcement Program and Child Access included recommendations to enhance client services and the provision of information to clients. MEP explored initiatives designed to increase the knowledge of clients and the general public regarding MEP practices. Under consideration were school presentations, enhancements to the Parenting After Separation course, information for professional groups and others.

MEP staff prepared a comprehensive *Lawyer's Guide to the Maintenance Enforcement Program* that was distributed to all lawyers and judges in Alberta. Information was also provided to the Canadian Bar Association regarding the newly proclaimed *Interjurisdictional Support Orders Act*. MEP staff provided the legal assistants program at Grant McEwan College in Edmonton with a presentation on MEP. Staff liaised regularly and made presentations to the Edmonton Prostitution Offender Program, which is directed at persons soliciting prostitutes, and the Equitable Child Maintenance and Access Society, a support group for non-custodial parents.

Strategy 3.10
Identify opportunities to share MEP file information with the Ministries of Children's Services and Human Resources and Employment to increase administrative fairness.

The Maintenance Enforcement Program has mutual clients with the ministries of Human Resources and Employment and Children's Services. Decisions made in those ministries, regarding Supports for Independence (SFI) or child welfare matters, can affect the administration of MEP's files. When clients receive SFI, a Human Resources and Employment program, maintenance payments up to the amount of SFI benefits are subrogated to the Crown and are not received by the client. Additionally, where a child who is the subject of a maintenance order is placed for adoption, the debtor's maintenance obligations cease. As a result of an Ombudsman's investigation into practices in the ministries of Human Resources and Employment and Children's Services, information was exchanged and manual adjustments were made to files. MEP has reviewed the sharing of electronic information with these ministries to improve the process and to ensure that public policy is administered consistently and fairly and now shares manual information with the ministries on a more regular and proactive basis. Electronic sharing of information continues to be investigated.

GOAL FOUR **Improve access to civil and criminal justice**

Strategy 4.1
Enhance access to Family Court by:

- ***Developing a plan to implement the government's response to the Unified Family Task Force Report***
- ***Examining the feasibility of expanding family mediation services throughout the province***
- ***Working with the judiciary, other ministries and stakeholders to make the family court system more user friendly and easier to understand.***

An implementation committee was established to implement the Unified Family Court in Alberta in 2005-06. The committee consists of representatives from the department, the Court of Queen's Bench, the Provincial Court, the Law Society of Alberta, the Canadian Bar Association, service providers, and other departments such as Children's Services, and Human Resources and Employment.

The expansion of family mediation services throughout Alberta to better serve the public has commenced. As soon as the necessary funds are available, the expansion will continue.

The Court Generated Orders Program was implemented. In this pilot program, a clerk drafts court orders made in Court of Queen's Bench chambers in Edmonton so that they can be signed by a justice, filed and served on the parties before they leave the court. Orders can become effective immediately. This saves parties time exchanging drafts, having them filed, and serving them by mail, and prevents further applications to settle orders where there is disagreement about the court's ruling.

Strategy 4.2
Propose reforms to update and consolidate existing family law to make it more accessible to Albertans.

The Family Law Reform Project has reviewed Alberta family law including the government's position regarding personal relationships. Major areas of review included termination of relationships, spousal support, guardianship of children, custody of and access to children and child support. There were consultations with interested groups and the public on proposed changes to Alberta family law.

The main partners with Alberta Justice on this project are Alberta Children's Services and Alberta Human Resources and Employment. Other departments were also consulted on the contents of the proposed legislation.

The *Adult Interdependent Relationships Act* was introduced in the Legislature in May 2002 and received royal assent on December 4, 2002. The act includes amendments to several Alberta laws that set out financial and property benefits and responsibilities for people in unmarried relationships involving economic and emotional interdependency.

Strategy 4.3

Develop alternative dispute resolution mechanisms for use in civil litigation to reduce cost/time of litigation:

Coordinate focus groups to recommend overall direction for court alternative dispute resolution (ADR) in Alberta.

The Canadian Bar Association Civil Justice Task Force recommended that non-binding dispute resolution processes be made available as early as possible in the litigation process and at minimum, after the close of pleadings and again after examinations for discovery; as well as a requirement that litigants certify that they have used such a process or establish that the circumstances of the case do not warrant it, as a precondition to receiving a trial date.

The Alberta Summit on Justice recommended that the use of justice alternatives to the traditional court system, including mediation and other forms of alternative dispute resolution, be encouraged and expanded.

The Civil Claims Mediation Program in Provincial Court in Edmonton and Calgary has successfully resolved 70 per cent of the cases that come to mediation, substantially reducing the costs, time and stress of litigation for the parties.

A national conference and Alberta Justice consultation process was held November 14-16, 2001 in Calgary. The national conference provided information on current and future trends in court-annexed mediation. The Alberta Justice consultation process had three stages:

1. A visioning process was completed on November 16, 2001.
2. Focus groups to consider the benefits of court annexed mediation in civil cases, concerns and essential principles for programs were held on February 14 and 21, 2002.
3. A working committee to include representatives of each focus group discussion was established April 2002. This group made recommendations to the Minister of Justice concerning court-annexed mediation in civil cases.

An implementation committee, and subcommittees on standards, mediators' roster and program evaluation have been appointed, and are working towards implementation of the pilot programs. It is expected that pilot programs in the Court of Queen's Bench will begin to operate in the 2003-04 fiscal year in the judicial districts of Edmonton and Lethbridge. It is hoped that a mediation pilot program can be implemented in the judicial district of Calgary the following year. This will provide an opportunity for parties to settle cases quickly, and save a substantial amount of money, time and effort.

Strategy 4.4

Assist with the identification, development and implementation of Aboriginal and justice community initiatives.

Each Crown prosecutors office across the province has worked on the identification, development and implementation of Aboriginal and community/restorative justice initiatives. Such initiatives were developed in partnership with both the local community and local justice stakeholders. In some Crown offices such initiatives are already well established. For example, the Lethbridge Crown Prosecutors Office is closely involved in the Blood Tribe and Peigan Nation sentencing circle initiatives, the Southern Alberta Institute for Restorative Justice and in Aboriginal and restorative initiatives in Lethbridge. Other Crown offices are in the preliminary consultation and developmental stages of such Aboriginal and community/restorative justice initiatives.

On September 16, 2002, the Deputy Minister of Justice hosted a meeting on the Aboriginal Policy Initiative. While most of the goals set out in the policy are the responsibility of other departments, Alberta Justice's Criminal Justice Division has two priority areas. First, the Edmonton Crown Prosecutors Office has set up a committee to organize sentencing circles. Letters of intent were submitted to gain funding for a co-ordinator's position. Second, an evaluation was completed for the Alexis Court Model. The recommendations of the evaluation are being reviewed to determine next steps.

Strategy 4.5

Explore the use of technology as a primary tool to improve access to the court system through initiatives such as caseflow management systems, support for Alberta One-Window Initiative and electronic filing.

Of particular significance to the use of technological solutions to improve access to the court system may be video conferencing in the courtroom, caseflow management coupled with e-filing, and possible payments of fines via Internet terminals connected to One-Window initiative receptacles. Some of these technologies, like video conferencing, are well researched and the need for them is spelled out in the Provincial Court's Three-Year Business Plan. Others, like caseflow management and e-filing are still being investigated and some procedural work will be needed before their implementation. Caseflow management will guide court personnel through the civil process, shortening the time a case takes. Coupled with e-filing it may significantly improve the way courts work.

A request for proposal for the Civil Case Management System (CCMS) project was prepared. Consultative meetings with the e-filing section of the Court Technology Committee have been held. Members of the core team met with Chief Justice Wachowich, Chief Judge Walter and members of the legal community in Calgary and Edmonton to request their support for the project and their participation in the request for proposal process.

Equipment for video conferencing for the Provincial Court pilot project was acquired. The pilot sites are the Calgary Young Offender Centre, Calgary Family and Youth Court, Edmonton Remand Centre, Stony Plain, Leduc, Wetaskiwin, Camrose, St. Paul, Bonnyville and Cold Lake provincial courts. Work on renovations in the Edmonton Remand Centre and Calgary Young Offender Centre is scheduled to begin soon.

Strategy 4.6
Review an increase to the civil claims limit to allow for improved access by self-represented litigants.

The *Provincial Court Act* was amended to authorize the Lieutenant Governor in Council to set the limit for small claims in an amount not exceeding $50,000. The small claims limit was increased from $7,500 to $25,000 in November 2002.

Strategy 4.7
Review other opportunities for improvements to court processes such as establishment of specialized courts (e.g. drug courts).

Specialized courts, such as domestic violence courts and drug courts, have been utilized in Ontario and the United States. A number of specialized courts are being piloted in Calgary and Edmonton. The Calgary Domestic Violence Intake Court was established in May 2000 and the project continues to operate as planned. The judiciary, the Calgary Crown Prosecutors Office and Community Corrections have dedicated staff to this court. In addition, Alberta Justice has been working closely with HomeFront Calgary and the Alberta Mental Health Board to provide offenders with appropriate treatment. The future of the domestic violence court project and possible expansion to other jurisdictions in Alberta will be dependent on the evaluations currently underway.

In Edmonton, all domestic violence cases (violence by one partner to another) are taking place in one dedicated courtroom and handled by one of three prosecutors who prosecute these cases exclusively. This courtroom has been operational since January 2002. Very positive reviews of the domestic violence court project have been received.

Strategy 4.8

Develop a process to resolve cases more quickly and effectively in conjunction with the judiciary, defence bar, police agencies, and other stakeholders:

Implement recommended strategies to better manage provincial court cases in conjunction with stakeholders, including the judiciary and defence bar.

The early case resolution initiative is designed to resolve criminal cases at the earliest possible time, thus avoiding the necessity for victims and witnesses (civilian, police and experts) to be subpoenaed and to attend court. The initiative also reduces the waiting time for cases that do require a trial. Following the success of pilot projects in Lethbridge and Edmonton, the Provincial Court Early Case Resolution Committee was struck and produced a report, which contained a series of recommendations designed to lead to an improved case management system to eliminate unnecessary delay and inefficient use of resources in the criminal justice system.

Since the Practice Note was issued indicating the Provincial Court of Alberta would be implementing Early Case Resolution (ECR) province wide effective March 1, 2002, there has been considerable success with this initiative. The Lethbridge experience in saving court time, as well as police and civilian witnesses has been replicated in other locations, particularly Edmonton and Calgary, where court volumes are very high. The Early Case Resolution Committee agreed to collect five reporting measures from eight specific locations. The measures include number of files reviewed, number of files resolved by ECR, number of police witnesses saved, number of civilian witnesses saved and estimated court time saved. The reporting locations include Calgary, Edmonton, Grande Prairie, Lethbridge, Peace River, Red Deer and Medicine Hat. Tracking the agreed upon measures will start April 1, 2003.

Enhance standards for bringing evidence before the court in conjunction with Alberta Solicitor General and police services.

Part of the work of the Policing Standards Committee is to develop a standard for bringing evidence before the court. The Standing Committee of Prosecutions and Enforcement (SCOPE) has been requested to develop provincial guidelines for court briefs and disclosure requirements. Sub-committees comprised of police representatives and prosecutors are meeting to develop the guidelines.

A Provincial Court brief has been approved by the chiefs of police and chief Crown prosecutors and has been forwarded to the Public Security Division of Alberta Solicitor General for inclusion in the Alberta Policing Standards.

Two subcommittees of SCOPE are working on the disclosure issue; one focusing on the disclosure process and one on cost issues. The prospect of providing disclosure electronically is under consideration.

The Edmonton Crown Prosecutors Office is operating a pilot disclosure unit. This unit can now produce a properly catalogued disclosure package for the accused within 24 hours of the information being sworn.

Encourage and assist with the training of police agencies in the implementation of the recommendations of the Affidavit Committee, which are designed to reduce the number of witnesses required to attend court to testify at trial.

The work of the Affidavit Committee is complimentary to the early case resolution initiative. The committee has developed a set of precedent forms to take advantage of those *Criminal Code* sections, which permit certain types of evidence to be given by way of solemn declaration in writing, rather than by oral testimony.

Training began in 2002/03 with sessions at the Edmonton Forensic Laboratory including investigators at Human Resources and Employment.

Strategy 4.9

Undertake a renewal process to modernize the prosecution service. In addition to addressing workload issues, the renewal process will include an operational review to identify process and structure options to improve service delivery and support organizational renewal.

A project team composed of Alberta Justice employees from Civil Law, Criminal Justice and Court Services, and consultants from TurnKey Management Consulting have compiled information about organizational issues and challenges, and improvement opportunities for Alberta Justice. The project team has analyzed the results obtained from interviews and focus group sessions. Based on these results and available leading practices, the Organizational Renewal Steering Committee will identify a series of initiatives that will serve to optimize the quality of service delivered to Alberta Justice clients while best serving the needs of the department's staff.

Pending the award of the renewal contract, Criminal Justice has taken some initial steps towards renewal by:

- Improving the disclosure process through a pilot project in Edmonton
- Developing para-legal support positions in the Edmonton Crown Prosecutors Office
- Beginning a review of docket courts in Edmonton.

The disclosure pilot project is operating in the Edmonton Crown Prosecutors Office. A demonstration of the disclosure unit to police services was done in mid-February. An evaluation of the project will be done early in the new fiscal year.

The two paralegal positions in Edmonton have been classified and successful candidates selected and appointed. The two paralegals have been integrated into the major crimes unit, which includes child protection, mega case and homicide cases.

Strategy 4.10

Work in partnership with the Alberta Law Reform Institute to rewrite and reduce the complexity of the Rules of Court.

Alberta Law Reform Institute has spearheaded a project to re-write the Rules of Court. Alberta Justice is one of the project sponsors. Milestones include the preparation of a report to the Minister, review of the report by the Rules of Court Committee, and consideration of the report by government. The report of the institute is anticipated to be issued in 2004.

Strategy 4.11

Review compensation for witnesses, jurors and interpreters.

Witnesses and jurors are entitled to reimbursement of meal and accommodation expenses on the same basis as public servants. However, the reimbursement rate for use of their vehicles is substantially lower. Public servants are entitled to 33.5 cents per kilometer while witnesses and jurors are limited to 10.5 cents per kilometer.

On the related matter of interpreter fees, the standard rate paid is currently $15.00 per hour, which was established back in 1984. It is difficult and sometimes impossible to get interpreters at this rate.

A committee was established to review compensation for witnesses, jurors and interpreters and it has completed a survey of other jurisdictions with respect to their existing compensation policy and fees. This information is being used to develop recommendations with respect to the existing fee structure and policy within the department's current fiscal framework.

Strategy 4.12

Improve public understanding and knowledge about the justice system through an education strategy and Justice web site.

Alberta Justice and Alberta Solicitor General have jointly developed a web site to better meet its users' needs. The homepage incorporates cross-government standards to increase familiarity for the user. The web site redesign, based on previous use statistics, allows the user to browse by subject and topic area rather than by department structure. A responsive search engine, an electronic map of Alberta, and clear navigation buttons help users to find the information they need. The site will be monitored and adjusted accordingly to meet user demands.

The Education Coordinator initiative was developed in response to the 1999 Alberta Summit on Justice recommendations to improve the public's knowledge, education and awareness of the justice system in Alberta.

Since 2000/01, the Education Coordinator has completed a gap analysis that identified information needs, initiated partnerships with other public legal education providers, and developed a comprehensive communications strategy that identified several initiatives to improve knowledge/understanding of the justice system.

Work has also begun to implement the strategies that were identified and developing resources to support them. Chief among these accomplishments was the development and distribution in 2002 of a teacher resource manual to support and encourage teaching about the justice system within the Grade 10 social studies curriculum.

Strategy 4.13

Develop a lawyer's guide to the Maintenance Enforcement Program (MEP) to improve legal services to the public.

The Maintenance Enforcement Program has identified a need in the legal community for increased information about its practices and ancillary information about family law. The provision of information to family lawyers will increase the level of service that they and MEP can provide to their clients. Following consultations with the Canadian Bar Association to address such policy matters as accessing MEP account information, removing MEP enforcement actions and MEP response times, a lawyer's guide to MEP was completed and distributed to all lawyers in Alberta through the Canadian Bar Association, Family Law Subsections. The guide was also provided to all judges in Alberta and is available on MEP's web site. The guide was featured in an issue of the Alberta Law Society newsletter.

Strategy 4.14

Continue to support standardized maintenance orders to reduce conflict between creditors and debtors, and to improve enforceability and administrative timeliness.

The Maintenance Enforcement Program (MEP) has identified that the lack of clarity or accuracy in court orders creates administrative difficulties for the program and conflicts between creditors and debtors. Disagreements between clients and MEP, or creditors and debtors occur when actions arising from ambiguous wording are disputed or the original intent of the order is not evident. MEP will continue to support Madame Justice Trussler's Edmonton pilot project to create standard court orders generated by court clerks to alleviate these problems of clarity.

Strategy 4.15
Examine the use of family conferencing for the resolution of conflicts that impede MEP collections.

Child access and maintenance enforcement are treated as two separate issues, however some creditors deny debtors access to their children when maintenance is not paid, and some debtors refuse payment where access is denied. These impasses are clear impediments to the collection of maintenance and are difficult to resolve. The Maintenance Enforcement Program has implemented a pilot program in Edmonton, where volunteer debtors and creditors undergo mediation of their dispute with an independent facilitator. The focus of the mediation is financial security for the children of the marriage. To date a small number of conferences have been held and potential participants for the process continue to be identified.

Strategy 4.16
Continue to support and develop court initiatives in First Nation communities.

Court and prosecution services are currently provided in a number of Aboriginal communities throughout the province with varying degrees of Aboriginal participation. Divisions of the department will continue to work with any interested Aboriginal communities to explore the feasibility of holding court in those communities. Currently, the department is exploring the feasibility of expanding a court model used by the Alexis First Nation to other First Nations in the Yellowhead Tribal Council area.

A consultant was chosen to conduct an evaluation of the Alexis Court Model. Focus groups, telephone and personal interviews and file reviews were conducted as part of this evaluation. The evaluation was conducted and submitted to the Deputy Minister of Justice. The recommendations of the evaluation are being reviewed to determine next steps, including the feasibility of expanding this model.

Strategy 4.17
Work with Alberta Infrastructure and the judiciary to consolidate the Calgary courts to ease crowding and make it easier for Albertans to access the justice system.

Work and consultation with Alberta Infrastructure on facility options has been ongoing for some time. A number of interim space options for the Court of Appeal were investigated. Alberta Infrastructure entered a lease agreement with the owners of the TransCanada Pipeline building in Calgary in late December 2001. Approximately 54,000 sq. ft. of space on the 26th and 27th floors of that building are allocated for the court in Calgary.

A functional program document was prepared for the Provincial Court component of the Calgary Court Strategy and similar documents for the Court of Appeal and the Court of Queen's Bench were completed in May 2002.

A consolidated functional program (bringing together three separate court programs) was completed. Following the closing of a request for quotation on January 31, 2003, three leading proponents were selected and invited to submit a request for proposal in March 2003. The request for proposal closed on June 20, 2003, and will be subject to final government approval.

Strategy 4.18
Work with Alberta Solicitor General to enhance the integration and effectiveness of the provincial court security program to ensure the safety of the judiciary, prosecutors, court staff and the general public.

With the increase in terrorist activities, organized crime, gang activities and other security concerns at court facilities there is an increasing demand for greater security at all court facilities from all court users.

The Justice, Solicitor General and Infrastructure ministers have reviewed the proposal for the implementation of perimeter security as well as enhancing security in the regional courts.

Alberta Solicitor General will move forward with a minister's report in the very near future.

Strategy 4.19
Develop a strategy to address increasing traffic ticket and bylaw volumes and ensure effective processing of these matters in the courts.

Discussions with the departments of Government Services and Innovation and Science confirmed the feasibility of using the Internet for the payment of fines. Documentation was prepared on the changes that need to be made both to the Motor Vehicle System (MOVES) and Justice Online Information Network (JOIN) in order to implement on-line payment of fines.

A preliminary review of electronic ticket processing has commenced to examine this issue from a legal perspective. As the issues appear to be complex, further review will be done with a recommendation on how to proceed expected in the fall 2003.

Strategy 4.20

Work with the Federal/Provincial/Territorial (F/P/T) Working Group to determine the feasibility of a unified trial court.

A background paper on trial court reorganization was prepared with four identified options:

(a) Trial court unification

(b) Two-level trial court structure

(c) Reorganizing and extending specialization, e.g. enabling provincial judges to conduct all judge-alone trials, as well as jury trials involving offences not within the exclusive jurisdiction of the superior court

(d) Trial court integration, where the two court levels would be left intact but the caseload of the court would be managed as a single undertaking using a team approach, supported by trial coordinators and court support personnel.

In September 2000, the F/P/T ministers approved a proposal to conduct a feasibility study of structural reform by a F/P/T cross-disciplinary working group. A report outlining the study's findings was prepared for F/P/T ministers.

In September 2001, the minister wrote the federal Minister of Justice and Attorney General, requesting the possibility of a pilot project on a unified criminal court in Alberta.

A working group held several meetings over the year and considered the possibility of a single level trial court among other options.

Strategy 4.21

Determine the feasibility of the recovery of revenue from corporations for lengthy civil trials.

The possibility of recovering additional revenue from corporations for lengthy civil trials was raised at Standing Policy Committee and the department was asked to explore the issue further. While some fees have increased recently, no further fee increases are anticipated at this time.

Strategy 4.22
Implement recommendations arising from the post-implementation review of the Civil Enforcement Act.

The *Civil Enforcement Act* came into force January 1, 1996 and a post-implementation review was conducted in 1999. The *Civil Enforcement Act* and regulation were amended to implement changes arising from comments in the post-implementation review.

Strategy 4.23
Review law reform and other reports for consideration of possible amendments to Alberta Justice administered legislation to improve access to justice.

The department receives proposals for law reform from a number of sources including the Alberta Law Reform Institute, the Uniform Law Conference of Canada and the public.

Briefings are prepared for the law reform proposals and are sent to the minister for consideration with the various committees of government. Proposals accepted for the government legislative program are then placed on the Three Year Legislative Plan for the department.

Major projects this year include Rules of Court Reform, Exigibility of RRSPs, and limitation periods for adverse possession of land. Class action legislation based on recommendations from the Alberta Law Reform Institute was passed on May 16, 2003.

Strategy 4.24
Make available to the public information on the application and operation of the Hague Convention on the civil aspects of international child abduction and the Alberta International Child Abduction Act.

One of the most challenging problems in family law is the removal of children from one country to another in contravention of custody or access rights. These are usually private family matters in which criminal justice remedies are not the most useful tools. Canada and Alberta are signatories to the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of Child Abduction, under which signatories agree to cooperate in locating abducted children, assisting in their return, and facilitating access. Each Hague jurisdiction has a government central authority to fulfill this role. The Attorney General is the central authority for Alberta, as represented by Family Law in Edmonton and Calgary. Fulfillment of this role includes public education about the central authority and other services available to prevent abduction and to deal with it when it arises.

Family Law responds to several calls every year from the public requesting general information on the Hague Convention. As well, in cases where abduction has occurred, Family Law provides services as the Central Authority. Family Law maintains a network of contacts that facilitates timely responses to these cases.

Strategy 4.25

Make available to the public information on the purpose and operation of the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner.

Presentations to a variety of groups involved with the Medical Examiner's Office are provided on a regular basis. Information in written form on the role of the office is provided to next of kin of all decedents whose deaths are investigated under the *Fatality Inquiries Act*, funeral directors, victim services organizations and the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta.

In addition, development of the Medical Examiner's Office component of the Alberta Justice web site continues to provide information, including annual reports, to the public.

Any direct inquiries for information on the office's role and function are answered directly by qualified staff.

GOAL FIVE **Provide effective legal services to the Government of Alberta.**

Strategy 5.1

Explore new models of service to address the increasing volume and complexity of prosecutions arising from provincial statutes.

In recent years there has been a steady growth in the level of regulatory enforcement as provincial agencies address public welfare concerns. Enforcement activity related to provincial statutes such as the *Fish and Wildlife Act*, the *Fair Trading Act*, the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, the *Labour Standards Act* and the *Professional Association Act* is expected to continue to increase.

As a result of such enforcement increases and the length and complexity of some regulatory trials, additional demands have been placed on the Crown Prosecutors Office. The effective prosecution of regulatory offences requires specialized knowledge of the legislation as well as knowledge of the full range of remedies. In addition, an understanding of the client department's long-term enforcement strategy and business operations increases the effectiveness of the prosecutions. At the same time as the demand for regulatory prosecutions is increasing, provincial criminal case workloads remain high and existing resources are focused on serious and violent crime leaving limited resources to address regulatory prosecutions.

Criminal Justice has established a small committee to prepare a comprehensive discussion paper examining the various provincial statutes prosecutions models currently in use in Alberta and across Canada. An initial draft of the paper was completed and includes a discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of each model and the legal and policy implications of the various approaches. A final draft is expected to be ready for review and discussion in early 2003/04.

Strategy 5.2

Assess and develop recommendations on the use of legal service agreements with client ministries to enhance the effectiveness of legal services.

Legal Services Division – Civil Law has met with all deputy ministers across government to discuss the implementation of legal service protocols with client ministries for the purpose of developing an integrated framework for the delivery of legal services, maximizing value of legal services to government and clarifying responsibilities for the provision of legal services.

Strategy 5.3

Implement an automated contingent liability and sensitive file tracking system to improve efficiency of provision of legal and related strategic advice to client ministries.

The Auditor General recommended that Legal Services Division – Civil Law develop an automated system that would enable more accurate and thorough reporting of contingent liability cases.

An automated system was completed and is providing reports on a regular (quarterly and year-end) and ad hoc basis. This system is updated periodically as data and reporting requirements change.

Strategy 5.4

Enhance the strategic legal advisor role of Alberta Justice by:

- ***Preparing a government litigation manual***
- ***Using the Government Litigation Manual and the Vision, Mission and Guiding Principles of Civil Law as the foundation for presentations to each client ministry on the role of Alberta Justice and client ministries in addressing legal and strategic issues.***

Senior management has identified the need for a central and uniform set of litigation practices, including important topics like:

- Significant/important cases (including who to notify)
- Lawsuits commenced by government (including what approvals must be obtained)
- Roles and responsibilities of client departments
- Duties of Legal Services Division
- Procedure for retaining outside counsel
- Role of Communications in litigation
- General litigation information.

A litigation manual was finalized, approved at all required levels, and presented to all deputy ministers. We are currently taking the technical steps necessary to have the manual available on-line to all departments through the government's internal web site and identifying client contact people from each department to attend a formal launch in fall 2003.

- ***Periodically distributing a client focused newsletter to client ministries that will provide updates on developments in the law relevant to government and review legal and strategic issues of importance to client ministries.***

Alberta Justice lawyers update clients on an as-needed basis throughout the year. The newsletter, which is still in the development and planning stage, will formalize the process.

Strategy 5.5
Offer and provide training sessions in legislative development to legislative planners in client ministries.

In order to ensure that departments are properly equipped and prepared to develop legislative proposals, Legal Services can offer training and expertise in developing these proposals.

A meeting was held with legislative planners from across government in June 2002. A booklet entitled *A Guide to the Legislative Process—Acts and Regulations* was produced in June 2002 and made available to legislative planners.

Strategy 5.6
Establish and lead government-wide committees at the assistant deputy minister level on legal and related strategic issues of government wide importance.

To date, four committees have been established:

1. **Family Law Reform Committee**

   This committee consists of ADM level representatives from the departments of Justice (Legal Services and Court Services), Children's Services and Human Resources and Employment. The mandate of the committee is to review and provide input on proposed amendments and a proposed consultation process.

   The *Adult Interdependent Relationships Act* was introduced in the Legislature in May 2002 and received royal assent on December 4, 2002. The act includes amendments to several Alberta laws that set out financial and property benefits and responsibilities for people in unmarried relationships involving economic and emotional interdependency.

2. **Residential Schools Litigation Instructing Committee**

   A committee of ADMs from the departments of Justice, Finance, Children's Services, Learning and Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development has provided instructions regarding the province's strategy for the residential schools litigation.

3. **Crown Agents Committee**

   This committee consists of ADM representatives from the departments of Children's Services, Community Development, Seniors, Energy, Finance, Gaming, Government Services, Human Resources and Employment, Infrastructure, Transportation, Innovation and Science, Justice and Municipal Affairs. Other departments are invited to participate. The mandate of the committee is to provide advice and recommendations to deputy ministers concerning the expectations of the government with respect to the actions and decisions of Crown agents that legally or financially impact on the government; the nature of the authority the government should exercise in this area (e.g. policy, regulation, legislation) and the extent of government regulation (e.g. a duty to consult or a duty to obtain approval).

4. **Aboriginal Consultation Committee**

   A committee of representatives from the departments of Justice, International and Intergovernmental Relations, Resource Development, Environment, and Treasury was created in October 2000 for the purposes of:

   - Creating a forum for discussion of issues and concerns affecting the departments in relation to consultation issues
   - Providing guidance to the officials' committee in relation to the consultation process
   - Providing instructions for Alberta Justice in relation to positions to be advanced before the courts and boards
   - assisting in meeting the objectives and timelines set out in the Aboriginal Policy Framework and the Aboriginal Policy Initiative.

   The Aboriginal Consultation Committee meets as required.

Strategy 5.7
Provide negotiation training courses to Civil Law lawyers.

In the Spring 2001, Legal Services Division – Civil Law ran a pilot negotiation skills workshop designed specifically for Legal Services Division – Civil Law lawyers. The workshop focused on principled, interest-based skills and techniques as well as a collaborative decision making process. It provided an opportunity for participants to gain an understanding of how to utilize interest-based negotiations in their every day work environment. A course manual was produced. The feedback from the workshop was very positive and in November 2001 another workshop was held. The evaluations by the attendees of the second workshop were also very positive.

Legal Services Division – Civil Law will provide a further negotiation training session for approximately 30 Alberta Justice civil law lawyers in June 2003. The course is specifically targeted for civil law lawyers and will be a combination of both theory and practice. The course will look at ways of enhancing the negotiation process for lawyers.

Priority Policy Cross-Ministry Initiatives and Key Corporate Strategies

In addition to the numerous strategies and initiatives undertaken by the ministry to meet its goals, the ministry is involved in several cross-ministry initiatives and corporate strategies.

Aboriginal Policy Initiative

Alberta Justice is a co-champion of the Aboriginal Policy Initiative (API), one of four government of Alberta cross-ministry initiatives. The API supports the Government Business Plan Goal Six: "The well-being and self-reliance of Aboriginal people will be comparable to other Albertans." It provides a mechanism for cross-ministry collaboration to address issues of concern to government and Aboriginal people living in Alberta including issues relating to justice and safe communities.

The Aboriginal Justice Initiatives Unit represents Alberta Solicitor General and Alberta Justice on various sub-committees of the API.

The strategies and targets identified through the API establish a framework for action through which all ministries can work together, and work with other partners on Aboriginal issues in a more consistent, timely, integrated and proactive manner. Alberta Justice continues to work with Aboriginal people and communities, federal and other governments, industry and other interested parties to improve the well-being and self-reliance of Aboriginal people and clarify federal, provincial and Aboriginal roles and responsibilities. A provincial diversion framework was developed and is intended to ensure that adults and adolescents with mental illness who are in conflict with the law receive appropriate care, support and mental health treatment. This framework will benefit Aboriginal people. The strategies and targets identified by Alberta Justice in partnership with Alberta Solicitor General promote safe communities and respect for the law, support community development and promote enhanced cultural awareness.

Alberta Children and Youth Initiative

Alberta Justice remains committed to the goal of the Alberta Children and Youth Initiative that states "all children and youth in Alberta are safe, well cared for, successful at learning and healthy."

- Two Edmonton courtrooms were dedicated to family protection cases: one is dedicated to domestic violence cases and the other is dedicated to child protection cases.
- A furnished child-friendly waiting room and child-friendly courtrooms were opened in Edmonton on December 9, 2002.
- A family violence prosecutor was designated in each regional Crown Prosecutors Office.

- The Office of the Public Trustee provides information to the public via seminars, the ministry web site, pamphlets and telephone.
- The Maintenance Enforcement Program (MEP) continues to collect court-ordered maintenance payments for spousal and child support.
- A Unified Family Court Task Force was established to consider the existing court structure and how access to the courts could be improved for family law litigants.
- A Family Law Staff Counsel Pilot Project was undertaken to provide legal aid services to eligible applicants in the family law area.
- Parenting After Separation courses continue to be delivered to parents who are involved in the Provincial Court – Family Division process.
- Consultations were held with interested groups and the public on proposed changes to Alberta family law.
- Family Mediation Services provide support and guidance for court-connected programs to help parents and children with family law matters.

Human Resource Strategies

Alberta Justice takes a proactive approach to addressing the key human resource strategies of the ministry and government. Initiatives undertaken to respond to the human resource priorities identified in the Alberta Justice Business Plan and the Corporate Human Resource Plan Development Strategy have addressed the targets set for building leadership capacity, attracting and retaining talent and aligning the management of human resource activities with the corporate goals and priorities of government.

Alberta Justice has increased leadership capacity through initiatives pursued to provide leadership training and development, mentoring assignments, specific training in resolving conflict and maintaining a positive workplace as well as a continuous learning strategy for department employees. To ensure the attraction and retention of talent Alberta Justice has adopted behavioral interviewing approaches, conducted exit interviews, participated in cross-government initiatives relating to attraction and retention and ensured timely formal and informal recognition of staff contributions. Assurance that the management of Alberta Justice human resources aligns with government and ministry goals and priorities has resulted from implementation of performance management processes and employee surveys aimed at strengthening employee understanding of how their work contributes to ministry success.

Information Technology Management Strategies

Alberta Justice made significant changes to its criminal justice information system to comply with the federal *Youth Criminal Justice Act* that came into affect on April 1, 2003. Construction of a new information management system for the Maintenance Enforcement Program continued with deployment scheduled for 2004.

Ways in which information technology could be utilized to improve programs and services were examined. These included the feasibility of electronic traffic ticket processing and the increased use of video conferencing in the court system. Justice participated in cross-government and inter-jurisdictional committees and initiatives as part of its commitment to ensure that information technology is used to enhance service delivery and information sharing effectively and efficiently.

Business Resumption Plan

Alberta Justice filed an updated Business Resumption Plan with Emergency Management Alberta in January 2003. Alberta Justice's Business Resumption Plan was updated to reflect the new information revealed during the last business resumption planning process and to address the Auditor General's findings regarding all ministries' emergency preparedness.

The Alberta Justice Business Resumption Plan was reviewed, validated and updated to identify services that are vital to Albertans and, most importantly, ensure that these vital services are delivered in times of emergency.

The Anti-Terrorism Act

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL OF ALBERTA
DECEMBER 24, 2001 TO DECEMBER 23, 2002

Preamble:

The *Anti-Terrorism Act* requires the Attorney General of Alberta to publish an annual report on the operation of those parts of the act dealing with investigative hearings and recognizance with conditions.

This constitutes the annual report of the Attorney General of Alberta covering the first year of operation of the act from December 24, 2001 to December 23, 2002.

I. **Report on the Operation of Sections 83.28 and 83.29 (Investigative Hearing)**

For the period from December 24, 2001 to December 23, 2002, the Attorney General of Alberta reports that there were no applications initiated under these sections of the *Criminal Code*. As such, there is no data to report in relation to the reporting requirements under paragraphs 83.31(1)(a) to (c) of the *Criminal Code*.

II. **Report on the Operation of Section 83.3 (Recognizance with Conditions)**

For the period from December 24, 2001 to December 23, 2002, the Attorney General of Alberta reports that there were no cases initiated under this section of the *Criminal Code*. As such, there is no data to report in relation to the reporting requirements in paragraphs 83.31(2)(a) to (f) of the *Criminal Code*.

Forward-looking Information

Alberta Justice continues to work on developing and improving our goals and performance measures by finding better ways to measure our performance through qualitative and quantitative analysis. To this end, the 2003-06 the Alberta Justice business plan includes several changes from 2002-05.

In 2003-06, a new goal and new performance measures will be reported, which reflect Alberta Justice's priority to improve Albertans' knowledge of, and confidence in, the justice system. Performance measures for this new goal include: public knowledge of the justice system and public confidence in the justice system.

New performance measures will also be introduced for several of the existing goals:

- Goal one: promote safe communities in Alberta
  New measure: public perception of prosecution services
- Goal three: provide access to justice services for Albertans in need
  New measure: client satisfaction with legal aid services (replaces the measure, "number of eligible Albertans receiving legal aid services")
- Goal four: promote a fair and accessible civil and criminal justice system
  New measure: average criminal trial lead time - youth
  New measure: average criminal trial lead time - adult
  New measure: provincial court civil mediation settlement rate
- Goal five: to assist government ministries to achieve their objectives through provision of effective legal and related strategic services
  New measure: client satisfaction with assistance in meeting corporate goals. (Under Goal five we will continue to report on the measure, "client satisfaction with legal services".)

In 2003-06, Alberta Justice will continue to find ways to improve the way we do business, making the best use of our resources. We will maintain working relationships with Alberta Solicitor General to support shared initiatives in youth justice, Aboriginal justice, organized crime and victims' services. The ministry will also bolster its partnerships with other provincial ministries, the judiciary, the legal community, Aboriginal people, and our stakeholders in policing, community organizations and local governments.

Many of the recommendations from the Justice Summit will continue to be a driving force behind our actions in 2003-06. In keeping with the recommendations and spirit of the 1999 Summit, the ministry will continue to consult with the public to ensure that our justice system addresses the current needs and priorities of Albertans. This new business plan takes into account and highlights the many issues that affect the justice system in Alberta.

METHODOLOGY

GOAL ONE **Promote safe communities in Alberta**

KEY MEASURE 1
Public Perception of Safety in the Home

Methodology: The public opinion telephone survey is conducted on an annual basis. The survey averages 20 minutes in length and was last conducted in January 2003. Professionally trained interviewers conducted all interviews in a central telephone facility. The survey is completed on a computer-assisted telephone interviewing system that allows for ongoing tabulation of results. Ten per cent of all interviews were monitored online.

All respondents met the following criteria: age 18 or over, 50 per cent male and 50 per cent female and representative of age groups in the general population.

As in previous years, in 2003 a total of 750 surveys were completed. The completed surveys were checked against the census data to ensure a representative sample across Alberta. Results are reliable to within +/-3.6 per cent at the 95 per cent confidence level.

KEY MEASURE 2
Public Perception of Safety in the Neighbourhood

Methodology: The public opinion telephone survey is conducted on an annual basis. The survey averages 20 minutes in length and was last conducted in January 2003. Professionally trained interviewers conducted all interviews in a central telephone facility. The survey is completed on a computer-assisted telephone interviewing system that allows for ongoing tabulation of results. Ten per cent of all interviews were monitored online.

All respondents met the following criteria: age 18 or over, 50 per cent male and 50 per cent female and representative of age groups in the general population.

As in previous years, in 2003 a total of 750 surveys were completed. The completed surveys were checked against the census data to ensure a representative sample across Alberta. Results are reliable to within +/-3.6 per cent at the 95 per cent confidence level.

GOAL TWO **Ensure victims have a more meaningful role in the criminal justice system**

KEY MEASURE 1
Client Satisfaction with Public Assistance Program

Methodology: A pretest of the telephone survey was conducted with individuals who had contacted the Calgary Public Assistance Unit (PAU) in 2002. The survey questionnaire was developed in 2002.

In Calgary, a random sample of people who contacted the PAU from July to December 2002 was selected to complete the telephone survey. The survey took an average of five minutes and was conducted in January and February 2003 by a survey administrator. Respondents were over the age of 18 and residents of Alberta with a working telephone. The survey population was 836. The sample size was 353. Results are reliable to within +/-5 per cent at the 95 per cent confidence level.

In Edmonton, the sample group included all of the individuals who contacted the PAU in December 2002. As with the Calgary sample, respondents were over the age of 18, resided in Alberta and had a working telephone. The sample group consisted of 62 individuals. Forty-nine surveys were completed, indicating a 79 per cent response rate.

GOAL THREE **Provide access to justice services for Albertans in need**

KEY MEASURE 1
Client Satisfaction with the Services of the Public Trustee's Office

Methodology: Client satisfaction with the services of the Public Trustee's Office is assessed using an internally conducted client satisfaction survey. Survey forms are sent to beneficiaries and minors after completion of administration and following payment of their beneficial interest distribution. Surveys are also sent to business partners, parents and guardians of minors and private and public guardians of dependent adults. During 2002/03, 2,947 surveys were sent to beneficiaries of estates, minors on achieving majority, parents and guardians of minors, and business partners. One thousand forty-five surveys were returned, indicating a response rate of 35 per cent.

KEY MEASURE 2
The Amount Collected on Maintenance Enforcement Program Files

Methodology: The Maintenance Enforcement Program collects and reports the amount collected per file as part of their operational data collection processes. The amount collected is based on program revenues tracked in the maintenance enforcement tracking system (METS) and reconciled to the bank on a monthly basis. The file volume is an average over a 12-month period based on the number of active files extracted monthly. Collections per file are derived by dividing the amount collected by the file volume.

KEY MEASURE 3
Maintenance Enforcement Program: Dollars Due Compared to Dollars Received (per cent collected)

Methodology: Terms of court orders are entered into the automated Maintenance Enforcement Tracking System (METS). Support payments that are due each month are then calculated by METS. Payments received are also entered into the system and calculated by METS monthly. Regular dollars due are compared by METS to net revenues to determine the percentage of dollars due that are collected. Regular dollars exclude special expenses, such as dental, legal, interest, consumer indexing costs and any "one time obligations" that MEP collects pursuant to court orders. This collection rate is presented monthly to the Maintenance Enforcement Program (MEP) management as an administrative tool. The data is aggregated into an annual figure to provide the collection rate for the year.

KEY MEASURE 4
Number of Eligible Albertans Receiving Legal Aid Services

Methodology: The Legal Aid Society collects and provides Alberta Justice with the number of eligible Albertans receiving legal aid services. This measure includes persons assisted by duty counsel and those for whom a certificate was issued for the appointment of counsel. The two numbers added together provide the volume of clients for the fiscal year.

GOAL FOUR **Improve access to civil and criminal justice**

KEY MEASURE 1
Median Elapsed Time from First to Last Appearance

Methodology: Performance data for median elapsed time from first to last appearance is obtained from the Adult Criminal Court Survey, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics (CCJS). Median elapsed time from first to last appearance represents the mid-point in elapsed time between first and last appearance for all cases processed in provincial court. For Alberta, in 2001/02, 50 per cent of the cases took under 72 days to dispose and 50 per cent of the cases took over 72 days to dispose.

The ministry provides annual data from the Justice Online Information Network to the CCJS Adult Criminal Court Survey (ACCS) through an automated interface. At CCJS, the data are edited, verified and signed off with the ministry. In 2001/02, adult criminal courts in nine provinces and one territory reported to the ACCS. Reporting jurisdictions include: Newfoundland and Labrador, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Quebec, Ontario, Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia and the Yukon. In addition, in 2001/02 superior court data was reported to the ACCS by Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, Alberta, British Columbia and the Yukon. These jurisdictions represent approximately 90 per cent of the national adult criminal court caseload.

In 2002, CCJS issued revised figures for 1997/98, 1998/99, 1999/00, and 2000/01. Revisions were made to the ACCS counting procedures and offence classifications. Applications under CCC s.810, s.810.01, s.810.1, and s.810.2 (peace bond applications) were excluded. Overall, the revisions reduced the number of cases. With the removal of peace bond applications, which would normally be short elapsed time events in provincial court, there was a slight increase in the median elapsed time over previously released statistics. Hence revised median elapsed time figures for Alberta for 1998/99, 1999/00, and 2000/01 are 80, 81 and 75 days, respectively. Revised Canadian median elapsed time figures for Provincial Court for 1998/99, 1999/00, and 2000/01 are 86, 89 and 91 days, respectively.

GOAL FIVE **Provide effective legal services to the government of Alberta**

KEY MEASURE 1
Client Satisfaction with Legal Services

Methodology: Client satisfaction with legal services is determined by an internally conducted survey. Alberta Finance's Statistics Unit provided consultancy advice on the survey in 2002/03. A random sample of 385 clients was chosen from the total population of 8,609. Out of the 385 surveys sent out, 204 responses were received, for a response rate of 53 per cent. Based on this response, overall survey results are precise within +/-6.8 per cent at the 95 per cent confidence level. Nine questions in the survey asked respondents to rate their level of satisfaction. The satisfaction scale provided for these questions was comprised of six levels of satisfaction with "1" representing "very unsatisfied" and "6" representing "very satisfied". Prior to this year's methodology (scale) enhancement, the scales for previous years were made up of five levels of satisfaction labeling one as "not at all satisfied", three as "satisfied" and 5 as "very satisfied".

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

MINISTRY OF JUSTICE

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2003

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AUDITOR GENERAL
Alberta

AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Members of the Legislative Assembly

I have audited the statement of financial position of the Ministry of Justice as at March 31, 2003, and the statements of operations and changes in financial position for the year then ended. These financial statements are the responsibility of the management of the Department. My responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on my audit.

I conducted my audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that I plan and perform an audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation.

The Ministry is required to follow the corporate government accounting policies and reporting practices as disclosed in Note 2. These accounting policies were established by Alberta Finance and are consistent across ministries. With certain exceptions, the basis of accounting is in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles. My reservation of opinion in this auditor's report identifies the exceptions from Canadian generally accepted accounting principles that arise from following the accounting policies established by Alberta Finance.

The following accounting policies are exceptions from Canadian generally accepted accounting principles:

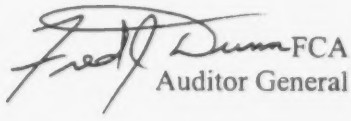
Capitalization of assets

The Ministry employs a policy of expensing new system development under $100,000 and all other capital asset purchases under $15,000. Consequently, a significant amount of resources available to the Ministry for future use has been recorded as if it had been consumed. It is estimated that at March 31, 2003 assets and net assets have been understated by approximately $7.6 million representing the unconsumed cost of capital assets at that date. The effect of expensing rather than amortizing capital assets is to understate expenses for the year ended March 31, 2003 by approximately $1.3 million.

Claims under the Motor Vehicle Accident Claims Act

The Ministry is responsible for evaluating and paying claims made under this Act. As disclosed in Note 7, the Ministry does not record a liability for personal injury claims that are likely to result in settlement. When such claims are likely payable, Canadian generally accepted accounting principles require recording an expense of the period and setting up liabilities. The effect of not reflecting these claims in the financial statements is to understate liabilities at March 31, 2003 by approximately $81.7 million and understate expenses for the year ended March 31, 2003 by approximately $5.1 million.

In my opinion, except for the effect of the matter discussed in the preceding paragraph, these financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Ministry as at March 31, 2003, and the results of its operations and the changes in its financial position for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles.



FCA
Auditor General

Edmonton, Alberta
May 23, 2003

Ministry of Justice
Statement of Operations
Year Ended March 31, 2003

(in thousands)

	2003 Budget (Schedule 4)	2003 Actual	2002 Actual
Revenues (Schedule 1)			
Transfer from the Government of Canada	$ 9,121	$ 9,371	$ 9,313
Investment Income	325	379	340
Fees, Permits and Licences	33,774	34,858	31,870
Other Revenues	57,024	57,424	46,016
	100,244	102,032	87,539
Expenses — Directly Incurred (Note 2b and Schedule 8)			
Voted (Schedules 3 and 5)			
Ministry Support Services	10,503	10,894	11,388
Court Services	91,864	92,895	89,128
Legal Services	65,420	64,325	60,952
Support for Legal Aid	28,187	28,187	27,242
Public Trustee	8,091	8,255	7,651
Medical Examiner	4,556	4,701	4,532
	208,621	209,257	200,893
Statutory (Schedules 3 and 5)			
Motor Vehicle Accident Claims	27,156	25,880	24,297
Valuation Adjustments			
Provision (Decrease) for Doubtful Accounts	200	4,151	(1,247)
Provision (Decrease) for Vacation Pay	173	1,451	(807)
	27,529	31,482	22,243
	236,150	240,739	223,136
Net Operating Results	$ (135,906)	$ (138,707)	$ (135,597)

The accompanying notes and schedules are part of these financial statements.

Ministry of Justice
Statement of Financial Position
March 31, 2003

	(in thousands) 2003	2002
Assets		
Cash	$ 13,102	$ 7,200
Accounts Receivable (Note 3)	48,382	50,142
Advances	59	65
Capital Assets (Note 4)	7,311	6,183
	$ 68,854	$ 63,590
Liabilities		
Accounts Payable and Accrued Liabilities	$ 30,342	$ 32,149
Unearned Revenue	1,061	1,044
	31,403	33,193
Net Assets		
Net Assets at Beginning of Year	30,397	19,841
Net Operating Results	(138,707)	(135,597)
Net Transfer from General Revenues	145,761	146,153
Net Assets at End of Year	37,451	30,397
	$ 68,854	$ 63,590

The accompanying notes and schedules are part of these financial statements.

Ministry of Justice
Statement of Changes in Financial Position
Year Ended March 31, 2003

	(in thousands)	
	2003	2002
Operating Transactions		
Net Operating Results	$ (138,707)	$ (135,597)
Non-cash items		
Amortization	654	686
Valuation Adjustments	5,602	(2,054)
	(132,451)	(136,965)
Decrease (Increase) in Accounts Receivable	(2,391)	5,820
Decrease in Advances	6	6
Decrease in Accounts Payable and Accrued Liabilities	(3,258)	(14,026)
Increase in Unearned Revenues	17	93
Cash Used by Operating Transactions	(138,077)	(145,072)
Investing Transactions		
Purchase of Capital Assets (Schedule 5)	(1,782)	(2,004)
Transfer of Capital Assets to Innovation and Science	-	22
Cash Used by Investing Transactions	(1,782)	(1,982)
Financing Transactions		
Net Transfer from General Revenues	145,761	146,153
Net Cash Provided (Used)	5,902	(901)
Cash, Beginning of Year	7,200	8,101
Cash, End of Year	$ 13,102	$ 7,200

The accompanying notes and schedules are part of these financial statements.

MINISTRY OF JUSTICE
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2003

Note 1 Authority and Purpose

The Ministry of Justice operates under the authority of the *Government Organization Act*, Chapter G-10, Revised Statutes of Alberta 2000. The Department of Justice is the sole entity for which the Minister of Justice has been designated as responsible for various acts by the *Government Organization Act* and its regulations.

The Ministry s purpose is to serve Albertans by promoting safe communities, by ensuring access to the courts and other methods of dispute resolution, by providing legal and related strategic services to the Government of Alberta, and by communicating with Albertans about the administration of justice.

Note 2 Summary of Significant Accounting Policies and Reporting Practices

The recommendations of the Public Sector Accounting Board of the Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants are the primary source for the disclosed basis of accounting. Recommendations of the Accounting Standards Board of the Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants, other authoritative pronouncements, accounting literature, and published financial statements relating to either the public sector or analogous situations in the private sector are used to supplement the recommendations of the Public Sector Accounting Board where it is considered appropriate. These financial statements are prepared in accordance with the following accounting policies that have been established by government for all departments.

(a) Reporting Entity

The reporting entity is the Ministry of Justice, which consists of the Department of Justice for which the Minister of Justice is accountable. These financial statements include the activities of the Motor Vehicle Accident Claims program (a statutory appropriation).

All departments of the Government of Alberta operate within the General Revenue Fund (the Fund). The Fund is administered by the Minister of Finance. All cash receipts of departments are deposited into the Fund and all cash disbursements made by departments are paid from the Fund. Net transfer from General Revenues is the difference between all cash receipts and all cash disbursements made.

Note 2 Summary of Significant Accounting Policies and Reporting Practices (continued)

(b) Basis of Financial Reporting

Revenues

All revenues are reported on the accrual method of accounting except for payments on Motor Vehicle Accident Claims judgment debts, which are recorded when received. Cash received for which goods or services have not been provided by year-end is recorded as unearned revenue.

Dedicated Revenue

Dedicated revenue initiatives provide a basis for authorizing spending. Dedicated revenues must be shown as credits or recoveries in the details of the Government Estimates for a supply vote. If actual dedicated revenues are less than budget and total voted expenses are not reduced by an amount sufficient to cover the deficiency in dedicated revenues, the following year s voted expenses are encumbered. If actual dedicated revenues exceed budget, the Department may, with the approval of the Treasury Board, use the excess revenue to fund additional expenses on the program. Schedule 2 discloses information on the Department s dedicated revenue initiatives.

Expenses

Directly Incurred

Directly incurred expenses are those costs the Ministry has primary responsibility and accountability for, as reflected in the Government s budget documents.

In addition to program operating expenses like salaries, supplies, etc., directly incurred expenses also include:

- Amortization of capital assets.
- Pension costs, which comprise the cost of employer contributions for current service of employees during the year.
- Valuation adjustments, which include changes in the valuation allowances used to reflect financial assets at their net recoverable or other appropriate value. Valuation adjustments also represent the change in management s estimate of future payments arising from obligations relating to vacation pay, guarantees and indemnities.

Incurred by Others

Services contributed by other entities in support of the Ministry s operations are disclosed in Schedule 8.

Note 2 Summary of Significant Accounting Policies and Reporting Practices (continued)

Assets

Financial assets of the Ministry are limited to financial claims, such as advances to and receivables from other organizations, employees and other individuals.

Assets acquired by right are not included. Capital assets of the Ministry are recorded at historical cost and amortized on a straight-line basis over the estimated useful lives of the assets. The threshold for capitalizing new systems development is $100,000 and the threshold for all other capital assets is $15,000.

Liabilities

Liabilities represent all financial claims payable by the Ministry at fiscal year end.

Net Assets

Net assets represent the difference between the carrying value of assets held by the Ministry and its liabilities.

Measurement of Uncertainty

(in thousands)

Measurement uncertainty exists when there is a significant variance between the amount recognized in the financial statements and another reasonably possible amount. Accounts receivable, recorded as $48,382 in these financial statements, is subject to measurement uncertainty. Accounts receivable includes certain outstanding federal statute and provincial statute fines that are expected to be satisfied by means other than cash payment. The other means include participation in the fine option program or time served in a correctional institution at the option of the person owing the fine. Outstanding fines expected to be satisfied by other means of $6,030 (2002 - $5,231) have been deducted from total outstanding fines of $37,541 (2002 - $31,879) to arrive at reported revenue and related accounts receivable. The estimate of $6,030 is based on the actual percentage satisfied in this manner from April 1, 2002 to March 31, 2003. Changes in the proportion of fines satisfied by other means may have a material effect on future operating results.

Valuation of Financial Assets and Liabilities

Fair value is the amount of consideration agreed upon in an arm s length transaction between knowledgeable, willing parties who are under no compulsion to act.

The fair values of accounts receivable, advances, accounts payable and accrued liabilities, and unearned revenues are estimated to approximate their carrying values.

Note 3 Accounts Receivable

(in thousands)

	2003			2002
	Gross Amount	Allowance for Doubtful Accounts	Net Realizable Value	Net Realizable Value
Government of Canada	$ 4,699	$ -	$ 4,699	$ 9,312
Fines	33,822	4,848	28,974	28,395
Fine Late Payment Penalty	11,216	485	10,731	8,719
Other	4,271	293	3,978	3,716
	$ 54,008	$ 5,626	$ 48,382	$ 50,142

Accounts receivable are unsecured and non-interest bearing.

Note 4 Capital Assets

(in thousands)

		2003			2002
	Estimated Useful Life	Cost	Accumulated Amortization	Net Book Value	Net Book Value
Equipment	10 years	$ 3,368	$ 2,933	$ 435	$ 425
Building	40 years	17	1	16	16
Computer Hardware and Software	5-10 years	13,668	6,808	6,860	5,742
Total		$ 17,053	$ 9,742	$ 7,311	$ 6,183

Note 5 Commitments
(in thousands)

As at March 31, 2003, the Ministry is committed under contracts, which expire on various dates to 2007, totaling $8,636 (2002 - $7,927).

The Ministry leases vehicles under operating leases that expire on various dates to 2007. The aggregate amounts payable for the unexpired terms of these leases are as follows:

Year	(in thousands)
2004	$ 92
2005	68
2006	42
2007	17
Total	$ 219

Note 6 Contingencies
(in thousands)

At March 31, 2003, the Ministry is a defendant in thirty-four legal claims (2002 - thirty two legal claims). Twenty-eight of these claims have specified amounts totaling $233,988 and the remaining six have not specified any amount (2002 - twenty nine claims with a specified amount of $137,231 and three with no specified amount). Included in the total legal claims are two claims amounting to $500, in which the Ministry has been jointly named with other entities (2002 - four claims amounting to $3,000). Nineteen claims amounting to $210,465 are covered by the Alberta Risk Management Fund (2002 - nineteen claims totaling $103,529).

The resulting loss, if any, from these claims cannot be determined.

Within the provision of the *Public Trustee Act* the Office of the Public Trustee remits unclaimed estate monies, which is reported as general revenue of the Department. If entitled beneficiaries are subsequently located, previously unclaimed estate monies are returned to the Office of the Public Trustee for distribution to the beneficiaries.

Note 7 Motor Vehicle Accident Claims Program
(in thousands)

Personal Injury Settlements

The Motor Vehicle Accident Claims Program is a publicly administered program that pays for judgments arising from motor vehicle accidents involving uninsured or unidentified vehicles in Alberta. The program operates under the authority of the *Motor Vehicle Accident Claims Act*. At March 31, 2003, there were two thousand three hundred and eighty one (2002 - two thousand three hundred and eighty four) unsettled motor vehicle accident claims under this program amounting to $302,608 (2002 - $273,497). Of the unsettled claims, it was estimated that approximately $81,704 (2002 - $76,579) may arise from court ordered judgments.

The *Motor Vehicle Accident Claims Act* states that in order for claimants involved in motor vehicle accidents with uninsured or unidentified vehicles to be entitled to compensation, the Minister of Justice must receive a court judgment. In accordance with the act, liabilities for personal injury claims are accrued when a court ordered judgment is received. Liabilities for motor vehicle accident claims amounting to $547 at March 31, 2003 (2002 - $772) are included in the total claim expenditures of $22,279 (2002 - $20,100).

Supplementary Medical and Rehabilitation Expenses

The estimated liability for supplementary medical and rehabilitation expenses on approved applications filed up to March 31, 2003, is $6,370 (2002 - $6,804) and has been recorded as a liability. As at March 31, 2003, the maximum amount that may be payable to or on behalf of entitled applicants pursuant to the limits set in Section 17 of the *Motor Vehicle Accident Claims Act* was approximately $25,968 (2002 - $28,184).

Note 8 Trust Funds Under Administration
(in thousands)

The Ministry administers trust funds that are regulated funds consisting of public money over which the Legislature has no power of appropriation. Because the Province has no equity in the funds and administers them for the purpose of various trusts, they are not included in the Ministry s financial statements.

Note 8 Trust Funds Under Administration (continued)
(in thousands)

As at March 31, 2003, the amount of trust assets under administration net of trust liabilities was as follows:

	2003	2002
Public Trustee —Trust Funds	$ 414,802	$ 410,909
Various Court Offices	38,951	36,907
Maintenance Enforcement	3,936	3,458
Solicitors Trust	54	1,316
	457,743	452, 590
Public Trustee — Other Estate Assets	49,956	46,236
	$ 507,699	$ 498,826

The Office of the Public Trustee administers the estates of decedents, dependent adults and minors. Total trust fund receipts and income adjustments exceeded total trust fund disbursements in 2002-2003 by $7,613 (2002 - $51,110). The major sources of receipts and income include pensions and similar receipts; investment income; and acquisition and sale of client estates. Significant disbursements include beneficiary distributions; client care and maintenance payments; release of client assets; and fees and taxes paid on behalf of clients.

In addition, the Office of the Public Trustee administers other estate assets consisting of client owned securities and investments, real estate holdings, accounts receivable, and personal property and other assets totaling $62,469 as at March 31, 2003, (2002 - $57,273). These assets are valued at fair value at the date the office obtains custody or nominal value when fair value is not readily determinable. Client liabilities as at March 31, 2003, of $12,513 (2002 - $11,037), are comprised of accounts, mortgages and notes payable, and are recorded at nominal value where actual value is not readily determinable. Net assets of $49,956 (2002 - $46,236) are not included in the Ministry s financial statements.

The Court Offices receive and disburse payments for fines, bail and other payments involving civil litigants. Total Court trust receipts exceeded total trust fund disbursements in 2002-2003 by $2,044 (2002 — disbursements exceeded receipts by $2,201).

The Maintenance Enforcement Program receives and disburses court ordered maintenance and child support. Total trust receipts exceeded total trust fund disbursements in 2002-2003 by $478 (2002 - disbursements exceeded receipts by $168).

Note 9 Payments Under Agreement
(in thousands)

The Ministry has entered into agreements to deliver programs and services that are fully funded by the Government of Canada and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Costs incurred under these agreements are made by the Ministry under the authority of the *Financial Administration Act*, section 25. Accounts receivable includes $42 (2002 - $12) from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, $50 (2002 - $0) from the Government of Canada for *Youth Criminal Justice Act*, and $81 (2002 - $0) from the Government of Canada for G8.

Agreements with the Government of Canada were for one time only funding for expenses incurred for Canada to host the G8 Summit and for system changes to Government of Alberta systems to comply with new federal youth justice legislation that came into effect April 1, 2003.

Agreement with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police is for cost recovery on toxicology casework done by the Medical Examiner s Office.

Amounts paid under agreements with program spo rs are as follows:

	2003	2002
Government of Canada —*Youth Criminal Justice Act*	$ 658	$ -
Government of Canada — G8 Summit	81	-
Government of Canada —Victims Service Project	-	24
Royal Canadian Mounted Police	149	11
	$ 888	$ 35

Note 10 Defined Benefit Plans
(in thousands)

The Ministry participates in the multiemployer pension plans, Management Employees Pension Plan and Public Service Pension Plan. The Ministry also participates in the multiemployer Supplementary Retirement Plan for Public Service Managers. The expense for these pension plans is equivalent to the annual contributions of $7,937 for the year ended March 31, 2003 (2002 - $7,202).

At December 31, 2002, the Management Employees Pension Plan reported a deficiency of $301,968 (2001 - surplus $5,338) and the Public Service Pension Plan reported an actuarial deficiency of $175,528 (2001 - actuarial surplus $320,487). At December 31, 2002, the Supplementary Retirement Plan for Public Service Managers had an actuarial surplus of $6,472 (2001 - actuarial deficiency $399).

The Ministry participates in the Provincial Judges and Masters in Chambers Pension Plan. The expenses for this pension plan are $5,068 for the year ended March 31, 2003 (2002 - $5,065).

Note 10 Defined Benefit Plans (continued)
(in thousands)

The Ministry also participates in two multiemployer Long Term Disability Income Continuance Plans. At March 31, 2003, the Bargaining Unit Plan reported an actuarial deficiency of $14,434 (2002 - deficiency $8,646) and the Management, Opted Out and Excluded Plan an actuarial deficiency of $3,053 (2002 - $2,656). The expense for these two plans is limited to employer s annual contributions for the year.

Note 11 Comparative Figures

Certain 2002 figures have been reclassified to conform to the 2003 presentation.

Note 12 Approval of Financial Statements

The financial statements were approved by the Senior Financial Officer and the Deputy Minister of Justice.

Ministry of Justice **Schedule 1**

Schedule to Financial Statements

Revenues

Year Ended March 31, 2003

(in thousands)

	2003		2002
	Budget	Actual	Actual
Transfer from the Government of Canada			
Legal Aid	$ 7,841	$ 8,008	$ 7,910
Other	1,280	1,363	1,403
	9,121	9,371	9,313
Investment Income — Bank Interest	325	379	340
Fees, Permits and Licences			
Court Fees	16,000	15,133	13,242
Motor Vehicle Accident Claims (MVAC)	13,800	15,021	14,390
Public Trustee Fees	3,512	4,180	3,735
Other	462	524	503
	33,774	34,858	31,870
Other Revenue			
Fines	35,077	31,659	23,691
Maintenance Enforcement Program	7,750	6,422	7,297
Fines — Late Payment Penalty	9,500	10,914	10,258
MVAC Recoveries	2,775	3,554	3,049
Refunds of Expenditure	15	2,860	68
Miscellaneous	1,907	2,015	1,653
	57,024	57,424	46,016
	$ 100,244	$ 102,032	$ 87,539

Ministry of Justice **Schedule 2**

Schedule to Financial Statements

Dedicated Revenue Initiatives

Year Ended March 31, 2003

(in thousands)

	Authorized Dedicated Revenues	Actual Dedicated Revenues		(Shortfall) / Excess
Ticket Processing	$ 13,077	$ 11,044		$ (2,033)
Provincial Civil Claims	960	348		(612)
	$ 14,037	$ 11,392	(1)	$ (2,645)

(1) Shortfall is deducted from current year authorized budget, as disclosed in Schedules 4 and 5 to the financial statements.

Ticket Processing revenues represent the Province s share of tickets designated towards all expenditures in Court Services, Criminal Justice and Strategic Services incurred in the processing and handling of violation tickets.

Provincial Civil Claims revenues represent amounts received from the public for filing civil claims in excess of seven thousand five hundred dollars in Provincial Court. These revenues are dedicated towards the costs of processing these claims.

Ministry of Justice **Schedule 3**

Schedule to Financial Statements

Expenses – Directly Incurred Detailed by Object

Year Ended March 31, 2003

(in thousands)

	2003 Budget	2003 Actual	2002 Actual
Voted			
Salaries, Wages and Employee Benefits (a)	$ 144,450	$ 142,401	$ 133,402
Supplies and Services (a)	34,625	37,004	38,381
Grants	28,740	28,980	28,344
Financial Transactions and Other	78	218	80
Amortization of Capital Assets	728	654	686
Total Voted Expenses	$ 208,621	$ 209,257	$ 200,893
Statutory			
Other	$ 27,156	$ 25,880	$ 24,297

(a) Salaries, wages and employee benefits and supplies and services expenses for Strategic Services programs are shared with the Ministry of the Solicitor General, which contributes its own share of expenses. Only the Ministry of Justice portion is disclosed in this schedule.

Ministry of Justice
Schedule to Financial Statements
Budget
Year Ended March 31, 2003

Schedule 4

(in thousands)

	2002-2003 Estimates	Adjustment (b)	2002-2003 Budget	Voted Supplementary (c)	Treasury Board Authorization (a) (d)	2002-2003 Authorized Budget
Revenues:						
Transfer from the Government of Canada	$ 9,121	$ -	$ 9,121	$ -	$ -	$ 9,121
Investment Income	325	-	325	-	-	325
Fees, Permits and Licences	33,774	-	33,774	-	960	34,734
Other Revenue	57,024	-	57,024	-	-	57,024
	100,244	-	100,244	-	960	101,204
Expenses — Directly Incurred:						
Voted:						
Ministry Support Services	10,503	-	10,503	216	-	10,719
Court Services (a)	91,864	(2,645)	89,219	1,193	960	91,372
Legal Services	65,420	-	65,420	946	-	66,366
Support for Legal Aid	28,187	-	28,187	-	-	28,187
Public Trustee	8,091	-	8,091	113	-	8,204
Medical Examiner	4,556	-	4,556	155	-	4,711
	208,621	(2,645)	205,976	2,623	960	209,559
Statutory:						
Motor Vehicle Accident Claims	27,156	-	27,156	-	-	27,156
Valuation Adjustments						
Provision for Doubtful Accounts	200	-	200	-	3,944	4,144
Provision for Vacation Pay	173	-	173	-	-	173
	27,529	-	27,529	-	3,944	31,473
Total Expenses	236,150	(2,645)	233,505	2,623	4,904	241,032
Net Operating Results	$ (135,906)	$ 2,645	$ (133,261)	$ (2,623)	$ (3,944)	$ (139,828)
Capital Investment	$ 2,241	$ -	$ 2,241	$ -	$ -	$ 2,241

(a) Includes an increase of $960 as a result of an approved increase in expense and dedicated revenue, pursuant to the *Financial Administration Act*, section 24 (2).

(b) Adjustment made for shortfall of dedicated revenue initiatives (Schedule 2).

(c) Supplementary Estimates were approved on March 10, 2003.

(d) Includes an increase of $3,944 in the allowance for doubtful accounts.

Schedule 5

Ministry of Justice
Schedule to Financial Statements
Comparison of Expenses – Directly Incurred and Capital Investments by Element to Authorized Budget
Year Ended March 31, 2003

(in thousands)

MINISTRY SUMMARY

VOTED EXPENSES AND CAPITAL INVESTMENTS

Program		2002-2003 Estimates	Adjustments (b)	2002-2003 Budget	Authorized Supplementary (c)	Treasury Board Authorized (a) (d)	2002-2003 Authorized Budget	2002-2003 Actuals (e)	Unexpended (Over Expended)
1	Ministry Support Services	$ 10,503	$ -	$ 10,503	$ 216	$ -	$ 10,719	$ 10,894	$ (175)
2	Court Services (a)	91,864	(2,645)	89,219	1,193	960	91,372	92,895	(1,523)
3	Legal Services	67,552	-	67,552	946	-	68,498	66,005	2,493
4	Support for Legal Aid	28,187	-	28,187	-	-	28,187	28,187	-
5	Public Trustee	8,091	-	8,091	113	-	8,204	8,255	(51)
6	Medical Examiner	4,665	-	4,665	155	-	4,820	4,803	17
		$ 210,862	$ (2,645)	$ 208,217	$ 2,623	$ 960	$ 211,800	$ 211,039	$ 761

STATUTORY EXPENSES

	Motor Vehicle Accident Claims	$ 27,156	$ -	$ 27,156	$ -	$ -	$ 27,156	$ 25,881	$ 1,275
	Valuation Adjustments	373	-	373	-	3,944	4,317	5,546	(1,229)
		$ 27,529	$ -	$ 27,529	$ -	$ 3,944	$ 31,473	$ 31,427	$ 46

(a) Includes an increase of $960 as a result of an approved increase in expense and dedicated revenue, pursuant to the *Financial Administration Act*, section 24 (2).

(b) Adjustment made for shortfall of dedicated revenue initiatives (Schedule 2).

(c) Supplementary Estimates were approved on March 10, 2003.

(d) Includes an increase of $3,944 in the allowance for doubtful accounts.

(e) Includes achievement bonus amounting to $2,621.

Ministry of Justice
Schedule to Financial Statements
Comparison of Expenses – Directly Incurred and Capital Investments by Element to Authorized Budget
Year Ended March 31, 2003

(in thousands)

PROGRAM 1 — MINISTRY SUPPORT SERVICES

VOTED EXPENSES AND CAPITAL INVESTMENTS

	Program	2002-2003 Estimates	Adjustments (b)	2002-2003 Budget	Authorized Supplementary (c)	Treasury Board Authorized (a) (d)	2002-2003 Authorized Budget	2002-2003 Actuals (e)	Unexpended (Over Expended)
1.0.1	Minister s Office	$ 403	$ -	$ 403	$ -	$ -	$ 403	$ 466	$ (63)
1.0.2	Deputy Minister s Office	488	-	488	-	-	488	541	(53)
1.0.3	Communications	347	-	347	-	-	347	349	(2)
1.0.4	Strategic Services	5,008	-	5,008	100	-	5,108	5,823	(715)
1.0.5	Human Resources	1,068	-	1,068	116	-	1,184	1,222	(38)
1.0.6	Management Information Services	2,603	-	2,603	-	-	2,603	1,918	685
1.0.7	Amortization of Capital Assets	488	-	488	-	-	488	488	-
1.0.8	Standing Policy Committee on Justice and Government Services	98	-	98	-	-	98	87	11
TOTAL PROGRAM		$ 10,503	$ -	$ 10,503	$ 216	$ -	$ 10,719	$ 10,894	$ (175)

Ministry of Justice
Schedule to Financial Statements
Comparison of Expenses – Directly Incurred and Capital Investments by Element to Authorized Budget
Year Ended March 31, 2003

(in thousands)

PROGRAM 2 — COURT SERVICES

VOTED EXPENSES AND CAPITAL INVESTMENTS

	Program	2002-2003 Estimates	Adjustments (b)	2002-2003 Budget	Authorized Supplementary (c)	Treasury Board Authorized (a) (d)	2002-2003 Authorized Budget	2002-2003 Actuals (e)	Unexpended (Over Expended)
2.1	**Program Support**								
2.1.1	Program Support Services	$ 4,660	$ -	$ 4,660	$ 67	$ -	$ 4,727	$ 6,042	$ (1,315)
2.1.2	Chief Provincial Judge s Office	1,624	-	1,624	12	-	1,636	2,580	(944)
2.1.3	Law Libraries	3,824	-	3,824	59	-	3,883	4,051	(168)
2.1.4	Ticket Processing	13,077	(2,033)	11,044	-	-	11,044	11,289	(245)
	Total Sub-program	23,185	(2,033)	21,152	138	-	21,290	23,962	(2,672)
2.2	**Calgary Court Operations**								
2.2.1	Calgary Court of Queen s Bench	6,336	-	6,336	124	-	6,460	6,453	7
2.2.2	Calgary Provincial Court	13,621	-	13,621	165	-	13,786	13,547	239
2.2.3	Calgary Family Mediation Services	765	-	765	16	-	781	705	76
2.2.4	Calgary Operational Support	1,741	-	1,741	32	-	1,773	1,846	(73)
	Total Sub-program	22,463	-	22,463	337	-	22,800	22,551	249
2.3	**Edmonton Court Operations**								
2.3.1	Edmonton Court of Queen s Bench	6,910	-	6,910	140	-	7,050	6,766	284
2.3.2	Edmonton Provincial Court	13,180	(612)	12,568	143	960	13,671	13,024	647
2.3.3	Edmonton Family Mediation Services	1,125	-	1,125	23	-	1,148	1,004	144
2.3.4	Edmonton Operational Support	1,944	-	1,944	38	-	1,982	2,096	(114)
	Total Sub-program	23,159	(612)	22,547	344	960	23,851	22,890	961
2.4	**Regional Court Operations**								
2.4.1	Lethbridge Courts	2,847	-	2,847	35	-	2,882	2,900	(18)
2.4.2	Red Deer Courts	2,493	-	2,493	43	-	2,536	2,838	(302)
2.4.3	Grande Prairie Courts	1,137	-	1,137	18	-	1,155	1,125	30
2.4.4	Peace River Courts	890	-	890	10	-	900	904	(4)
2.4.5	Wetaskiwin Courts	931	-	931	18	-	949	937	12
2.4.6	Fort McMurray Courts	652	-	652	12	-	664	645	19
2.4.7	St. Paul Courts	1,417	-	1,417	18	-	1,435	1,448	(13)
2.4.8	Drumheller Courts	478	-	478	8	-	486	503	(17)
2.4.9	Medicine Hat Courts	1,021	-	1,021	19	-	1,040	1,176	(136)
2.4.10	Regional Provincial Courts	5,781	-	5,781	81	-	5,862	6,214	(352)
2.4.11	Regional Family Mediation Services	1,046	-	1,046	16	-	1,062	444	618
2.4.12	Regional Operational Support	1,167	-	1,167	27	-	1,194	1,322	(128)
	Total Sub-program	19,860	-	19,860	305	-	20,165	20,456	(291)
2.5	**Court of Appeal**								
2.5.1	Court of Appeal	3,197	-	3,197	69	-	3,266	3,036	230
	Total Sub-program	3,197	-	3,197	69	-	3,266	3,036	230
TOTAL PROGRAM		$ 91,864	$ (2,645)	$ 89,219	$ 1,193	$ 960	$ 91,372	$ 92,895	$ (1,523)

Ministry of Justice
Schedule to Financial Statements
Comparison of Expenses – Directly Incurred and Capital Investments by Element to Authorized Budget
Year Ended March 31, 2003

(in thousands)

PROGRAM 3 — LEGAL SERVICES

VOTED EXPENSES AND CAPITAL INVESTMENTS

Program	2002-2003 Estimates	Adjustments (b)	2002-2003 Budget	Authorized Supplementary (c)	Treasury Board Authorized (a) (d)	2002-2003 Authorized Budget	2002-2003 Actuals (e)	Unexpended (Over Expended)
3.0.1 Law Reform	$ 320	$ -	$ 320	$ -	$ -	$ 320	$ 320	$ -
3.0.2 Legislative Counsel	1,602	-	1,602	-	-	1,602	1,677	(75)
3.0.3 Civil Law	19,516	-	19,516	564	-	20,080	18,429	1,651
3.0.4 Criminal Justice	34,612	-	34,612	169	-	34,781	33,705	1,076
3.0.5 Maintenance Enforcement Office								
- Operating Expense	8,046	-	8,046	128	-	8,174	8,819	(645)
- Capital Investment	2,132	-	2,132	-	-	2,132	1,680	452
3.0.6 Child-Centred Family Justice	1,317	-	1,317	85	-	1,402	1,368	34
3.0.7 Amortization of Capital Assets	7	-	7	-	-	7	7	-
TOTAL PROGRAM	$ 67,552	$ -	$ 67,552	$ 946	$ -	$ 68,498	$ 66,005	$ 2,493

(in thousands)

PROGRAM 4 — SUPPORT FOR LEGAL AID

VOTED EXPENSES AND CAPITAL INVESTMENTS

Program	2002-2003 Estimates	Adjustments (b)	2002-2003 Budget	Authorized Supplementary (c)	Treasury Board Authorized (a) (d)	2002-2003 Authorized Budget	2002-2003 Actuals (e)	Unexpended (Over Expended)
4.0.1 Legal Aid Plan	$ 28,187	$ -	$ 28,187	$ -	$ -	$ 28,187	$ 28,187	$ -

(in thousands)

PROGRAM 5 — PUBLIC TRUSTEE

VOTED EXPENSES AND CAPITAL INVESTMENTS

Program	2002-2003 Estimates	Adjustments (b)	2002-2003 Budget	Authorized Supplementary (c)	Treasury Board Authorized (a) (d)	2002-2003 Authorized Budget	2002-2003 Actuals (e)	Unexpended (Over Expended)
5.0.1 Public Trustee	$ 8,091	$ -	$ 8,091	$ 113	$ -	$ 8,204	$ 8,255	$ (51)

Ministry of Justice
Schedule to Financial Statements
Comparison of Expenses – Directly Incurred and Capital Investments by Element to Authorized Budget
Year Ended March 31, 2003

(in thousands)

PROGRAM 6 — MEDICAIEXAMINER

VOTED EXPENSES AND CAPITAL INVESTMENTS

	Program	2002-2003 Estimates	Adjustments (b)	2002-2003 Budget	Authorized Supplementary (c)	Treasury Board Authorized (a) (d)	2002-2003 Authorized Budget	2002-2003 Actuals (e)	Unexpended (Over Expended)
6.0.1	Medical Examiner								
	- Operating Expense	$ 4,323	$ -	$ 4,323	$ 155	$ -	$ 4,478	$ 4,542	$ (64)
	- Capital Investment	109	-	109	-	-	109	102	7
6.0.2	Amortization of Capital Assets	233	-	233	-	-	233	159	74
TOTAL PROGRAM		$ 4,665	$ -	$ 4,665	$ 155	$ -	$ 4,820	$ 4,803	$ 17

(in thousands)

STATUTORY PROGRAMS

Appropriation not voted by the Legislative Assembly pursuant to the *Motor Vehicle Accident Claims Act*

STATUTORY EXPENSES

	2002-2003 Estimates	Adjustments (b)	2002-2003 Budget	Authorized Supplementary (c)	Treasury Board Authorized (a) (d)	2002-2003 Authorized Budget	2002-2003 Actuals (e)	Unexpended (Over Expended)
Motor Vehicle Accident Claims	$ 27,156	$ -	$ 27,156	$ -	$ -	$ 27,156	$ 25,881	$ 1,275
Valuation Adjustments	373	-	373	-	3,944	4,317	5,546	(1,229)
	$ 27,529	$ -	$ 27,529	$ -	$ 3,944	$ 31,473	$ 31,427	$ 46

Ministry of Justice **Schedule 6**

Schedule to Financial Statements

Salary and Benefits Disclosure

Year Ended March 31, 2003

	2003			2002
	Salary (1)	Benefits and Allowances (2)	Total	Total
Deputy Minister (3)	$ 210,850	$ 41,558	$ 252,408	$ 188,020
Assistant Deputy Minister, Legal Services	168,411	49,346	217,757	157,676
Assistant Deputy Minister, Court Services	167,407	49,190	216,597	170,472
Assistant Deputy Minister, Criminal Justice	167,522	50,037	217,559	159,840
Assistant Deputy Minister, Strategic Services (4)	142,824	34,632	177,456	154,159
Executive Director, Human Resources (4)	112,312	26,395	138,707	128,285

Total salary and benefits relating to a position are disclosed.

(1) Salary includes regular base pay, bonuses, overtime and lump sum payments.

(2) Benefits and allowances include the government s share of all employee benefits and contributions or payments made on behalf of employees including pension, health care, dental coverage, group life insurance, short and long term disability plans, WCB premiums, professional memberships and tuition fees.

(3) Automobile provided, no dollar amount included in benefits and allowances.

(4) The incumbents services are shared with the Ministry of the Solicitor General, which contributes its own share of the cost of salary and benefits. Full salary and benefits are disclosed in this schedule.

Ministry of Justice
Schedule to Financial Statements
Related Party Transactions
Year Ended March 31, 2003
(in thousands)

Schedule 7

Related parties are those entities consolidated or accounted for on a modified equity basis in the Province of Alberta s financial statements. Related parties also include management in the Ministry.

The Ministry and its employees paid or collected certain taxes and fees set by regulation for permits, licences and other charges. These amounts were incurred in the normal course of business, reflect charges applicable to all users, and have been excluded from this Schedule.

The Ministry had the following transactions with related parties recorded on the Statement of Operations and the Statement of Financial Position at the amount of consideration agreed upon between the related parties:

	Other Entities	
	2003	2002
Expenses — Directly Incurred		
Alberta Corporate Service Centre	$ 10,163	$ 7,669
Information Technology	922	495
Vehicles (EVO/CVO)	16	13
Parking	4	7
Queen s Printer	52	-
Finance — Statistics	·2	-
	$ 11,159	$ 8,184
Capital Assets Transferred	$ -	$ 22

The Ministry also had the following transactions with related parties for which no consideration was exchanged. The amounts for these related party transactions are estimated based on the costs incurred by the service provider to provide the service. These amounts are not recorded in the financial statements but are disclosed in Schedule 8.

	Other Entities		Entities in the Ministry	
	2003	2002	2003	2002
Revenues				
Legal Services	$15,756	$14,829	$3,237	$3,909
	$15,756	$14,829	$3,237	$3,909
Expenses — Indirectly Incurred				
Accommodation	$35,610	$28,841	$ -	$ -
Legal Services	-	-	3,237	3,909
	$35,610	$28,841	$3,237	$3,909

The Ministry receives services under contracts managed by the Ministry of Government Services, Alberta Corporate Service Centre (ACSC). Any commitments under these contracts are reported by ACSC.

Ministry of Justice
Schedule to Financial Statements
Allocated Costs
Year Ended March 31, 2003

Schedule 8

(in thousands)

Program	2003 Expenses (1)	Expenses — Incurred by Others: Accommodation Costs	Expenses — Incurred by Others: Legal Services (2)	Valuation Adjustments: Vacation Pay	Valuation Adjustments: Doubtful Accounts	2003 Total Expenses	2002 Total Expenses
Voted:							
Ministry Support Services	$ 10,894	$ 639	$ 1,759	$ 229	$ -	$ 13,521	$ 13,882
Court Services	92,895	29,572	150	320	4,151	127,088	111,382
Legal Services	64,325	3,344	(2,727)	654	-	65,596	60,100
Support for Legal Aid	28,187	18	25	-	-	28,230	27,288
Public Trustee	8,255	1,031	27	61	-	9,374	8,349
Medical Examiner	4,701	883	254	186	-	6,024	5,332
	209,257	35,487	(512)	1,450	4,151	249,833	226,333
Statutory:							
Motor Vehicle Accident Claims	25,880	123	512	1	-	26,516	25,644
	$ 235,137	$ 35,610	$ -	$ 1,451	$ 4,151	$ 276,349	$ 251,977

(1) Expenses as per Statement of Operations, excluding valuation adjustments.

(2) Expenses for Legal Services are internally allocated.

OTHER FINANCIAL INFORMATION

The Following Information is Unaudited

Other Financial Information

FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2003

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Fine Collection Cost Estimates 121

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- Estimated Cost of Collecting a Federal Statute Fine 122

Other Financial Information

Statement of Remissions, Compromises and Write-offs for the Year Ended March 31, 2003

The following statement of compromises and write-offs has been prepared pursuant to section 23 of the *Financial Administration Act*. The statement includes all compromises and write-offs of the Ministry of Justice made or approved during the fiscal year.

	$ (000)
Remissions:	$
Compromises:	
Motor Vehicle Accident Claims	$ 48
Maintenance Enforcement Program	4
	$ 52
Write-offs:	
Motor Vehicle Accident Claims	$7,419
Fines	2,680
Late Payment Penalties	482
Abandoned and Seized Vehicles	210
Maintenance Enforcement Program	121
	$10,912
Total Remissions, Compromises and Write-offs	$10,964

Civil Law Legal Services Delivery - Current and Prior Year Comparison

Staff Providing Services

Civil Law provides legal and related strategic services to all government ministries. Civil Law maintains a time keeping system to enable its lawyers, paralegals and articling students to record and report the hours of legal services provided in total to each ministry and their respective programs. In 2001/02 125 lawyers, paralegals and articling students recorded in excess of 140 thousand hours of provided legal services and in 2002/03 139 such staff recorded more than 154 thousand hours. The total hours of service to each ministry is used as the basis to allocate legal services costs.

Cost of Legal Services

During the 2000/01 fiscal year a costing methodology was developed to estimate the costs for providing legal services for allocation to all client ministries. The estimated costs include the total cost of Civil Law less expenditures on contracted services and grants to third parties. A proportionate amount for support services provided by Strategic Services and Human Resource Services is included in the estimate. The estimate also includes accommodation costs for office space in government owned or leased buildings as paid by and reported by the Ministry of Infrastructure. The estimated costs are allocated to each department based on the hours of service received. Alberta Justice, as a service provider, sends the legal services cost information to each ministry for disclosure in the Related Party Transactions Schedule and the Allocated Costs Schedule to the financial statements of each ministry s annual report.

Client Satisfaction Rate

The percentage of clients who were more than *satisfied* to *very satisfied* with the legal services provided was 88 per cent in 2002/03 and 81 per cent in 2001/02. This performance measure is fully described under Goal 5 in this annual report.

Current and Prior Year Comparison

The table below summarizes the estimated cost of allocated legal services, the number of hours allocated, the average hourly cost and the client satisfaction rate.

Cost Estimates	2002/03	2001/02
Total Civil Law Costs	$18,428,881	$18,380,633
Deduct Contract Services & Grants	1,511,088	2,453,849
	$16,917,793	$15,926,784
Add Support Services	642,058	487,390
Accommodation	658,762	488,807
Total Legal Services Costs for Allocation	$18,218,613	$16,902,981
Number of Hours of Service Provided	154,335.6	140,955.5
Average Hourly Cost	$118.05	$119.92
Client Satisfaction Rate	88%	81%

Fine Activity and Violation Ticket Activity Information

Overview:

In October 2001 a series of management information reports were implemented to provide the majority of summary data on fine activity and violation ticket activity in the province. Two complete fiscal years (2002/03 and 2003/04) of this information, for comparative purposes, will not be available until March 2004. The Per Cent of Total Number and the Per Cent of Total Value is relatively comparable for the April 2002 to March 2003 and October 2001 to March 2002 time frames summarized in the tables below.

Fine Activity Information

Federal and Provincial Statute Offences and Municipal Bylaw Offences

One of the reports implemented in October 2001 summarizes fine activity by the four major recipients entitled to the fines. The municipalities receive specific provincial statute offence fines and all municipal bylaw fines for offences occurring within municipal boundaries. The majority of municipal fine activity occurs in cities, towns, counties and municipal districts. The Alberta government receives fines for provincial statute offences occurring on primary highways and other specific provincial statute offences. The Alberta government receives any late payment penalties on overdue fines and some fines under the *Criminal Code of Canada*. The Victims of Crime Fund, administered by Alberta Solicitor General, receives a 15 per cent surcharge on all provincial statute fines and a surcharge on selective federal statute offences. These surcharge revenues are used to fund victims programs in Alberta. The federal government receives fines for federal statute offences and selective fines under the *Criminal Code*.

The tables below summarize fines imposed, fine payments and uncollectible fines for the twelve months from April 2002 to March 2003and for the six months from October 2001 to March 2002, by the recipient level of government. The final two tables summarize outstanding fines at March 31, 2003 and March 31, 2002, by the recipient level of government.

Fines Imposed —April 2002 to March 2003

Recipient	Number of Fines Imposed	Per Cent of Total Number	Dollar Value of Fines Imposed	Per Cent of Total Value
Municipalities	1,156,104	40.3%	$ 92,657,228	61.5%
Alberta Government	615,418	21.4%	39,616,487	26.3%
Victims of Crime Fund	1,095,153	38.2%	16,366,869	10.9%
Federal Government	1,783	0.1%	2,133,980	1.3%
Total	2,868,458	100.0%	$150,774,564	100.0%

Fines Imposed - October 2001 to March 2002

Recipient	Number of Fines Imposed	Per Cent of Total Number	Dollar Value of Fines Imposed	Per Cent of Total Value
Municipalities	543,034	39.5%	$ 38,991,708	58.5%
Alberta Government	298,989	21.8%	19,522,155	29.3%
Victims of Crime Fund	531,182	38.7%	7,106,942	10.7%
Federal Government	734	0.1%	1,052,887	1.6%
Total	1,373,939	100.0%	$ 66,673,692	100.0%

Fine Payments —April 2002 to March 2003

Recipient	Number of Fines Payments	Per Cent of Total Number	Dollar Value of Fines Payments	Per Cent of Total Value
Municipalities	1,101,747	40.1%	$ 78,766,703	64.1%
Alberta Government	595,352	21.7%	28,794,748	23.4%
Victims of Crime Fund	1,046,581	38.1%	13,072,454	10.6%
Federal Government	2,054	0.1%	2,225,852	1.9%
Total	2,745,734	100.0%	$122,859,757	100.0%

Fine Payments - October 2001 to March 2002

Recipient	Number of Fines Payments	Per Cent of Total Number	Dollar Value of Fines Payments	Per Cent of Total Value
Municipalities	526,014	39.7%	$ 33,976,466	62.1%
Alberta Government	290,066	21.9%	14,408,008	26.3%
Victims of Crime Fund	509,275	38.4%	5,690,163	10.4%
Federal Government	746	0.1%	663,484	1.2%
Total	1,326,101	100.0%	$ 54,738,121	100.0%

Uncollectible Fines —April 2002 to March 2003

Recipient	Number of Uncollectible Fines	Per Cent of Total Number	Dollar Value of Uncollectible Fines	Per Cent of Total Value
Municipalities	23,132	38.2%	$ 2,613,980	43.9%
Alberta Government	33,904	56.0%	3,223,397	54.2%
Victims of Crime Fund	3,473	5.7%	140,745	2.4%
Federal Government	35	0.1%	(28,953)	-0.5%
Total	60,544	100.0%	$ 5,949,169	100.0%

Uncollectible Fines - October 2001 to March 2002

Recipient	Number of Fines Imposed	Per Cent of Total Number	Dollar Value of Fines Imposed	Per Cent of Total Value
Municipalities	11,158	45.4%	$ 1,184,658	68.4%
Alberta Government	12,308	50.1%	502,269	29.0%
Victims of Crime Fund	1,084	4.4%	46,028	2.7%
Federal Government	3	0.0%	0	0.0%
Total	24,553	100.0%	$ 1,732,955	100.0%

Outstanding Fines —April 2002 to March 2003

Recipient	Number of Fines Imposed	Per Cent of Total Number	Dollar Value of Fines Imposed	Per Cent of Total Value
Municipalities	467,735	42.4%	$ 57,160,450	51.4%
Alberta Government	595,541	54.0%	48,264,051	43.4%
Victims of Crime Fund	36,724	3.3%	2,155,409	1.9%
Federal Government	2,623	0.3%	3,659,691	3.3%
Total	1,102,623	100.0%	$111,239,601	100.0%

Outstanding Fines - October 2001 to March 2002

Recipient	Number of Fines Imposed	Per Cent of Total Number	Dollar Value of Fines Imposed	Per Cent of Total Value
Municipalities	417,135	41.7%	$ 49,198,406	51.0%
Alberta Government	546,647	54.7%	42,541,627	44.1%
Victims of Crime Fund	34,711	3.5%	1,932,474	2.0%
Federal Government	1,724	0.2%	2,713,296	2.8%
Total	1,000,217	100.0%	$ 96,385,803	100.0%

Violation Ticket Activity Information

One of the reports implemented in October 2001 summarizes violation ticket activity by the province of residence for a vehicle driver/owner receiving a ticket in Alberta. A significant portion of Provincial Court resources is directed towards the handling and processing of all violation tickets for provincial statute offences issued in Alberta. The values summarized in the tables are inclusive of the fine and the provincial fine surcharge.

The tables below summarize violation ticket fines imposed, fine payments and uncollectible fines for the six months from October 2001 to March 2002 and for the twelve months from April 2002 to March 2003, by province of offender. The final two tables summarize outstanding fines at March 31, 2002 and March 31, 2003.

Violation Ticket Fines Imposed April 2002 to March 2003

Resident of	Number of Ticket Fines Imposed	Per Cent of Total Number	Dollar Value of Ticket Fines Imposed	Per Cent of Total Value
Alberta	1,217,328	96.9%	$113,884,092	96.0%
British Columbia	16,248	1.3%	2,012,932	1.7%
Saskatchewan	10,491	0.8%	1,242,926	1.0%
All Other	12,130	1.0%	1,509,238	1.3%
Total	1,256,197	100.0%	$118,649,188	100.0%

Violation Ticket Fines Imposed - October 2001 to March 2002

Resident of	Number of Ticket Fines Imposed	Per Cent of Total Number	Dollar Value of Ticket Fines Imposed	Per Cent of Total Value
Alberta	578,988	96.8%	$ 48,805,288	95.8%
British Columbia	7,852	1.3%	902,334	1.8%
Saskatchewan	5,420	0.9%	580,957	1.1%
All Other	6,101	1.0%	668,403	1.3%
Total	598,361	100.0%	$ 50,956,982	100.0%

Violation Tickets Paid --April 2002 to March 2003

Resident of	Number of Tickets Paid	Per Cent of Total Number	Dollar Value of Tickets Paid	Per Cent of Total Value
Alberta	1,179,811	97.9%	$106,826,677	97.4%
British Columbia	9,118	0.8%	1,070,309	1.0%
Saskatchewan	7,839	0.7%	837,160	0.8%
All Other	8,574	0.6%	952,465	0.8%
Total	1,205,342	100.0%	$109,686,611	100.0%

Violation Tickets Paid - October 2001 to March 2002

Resident of	Number of Tickets Paid	Per Cent of Total Number	Dollar Value of Tickets Paid	Per Cent of Total Value
Alberta	570,091	97.8%	$ 46,919,070	97.3%
British Columbia	4,520	0.8%	474,412	1.0%
Saskatchewan	4,118	0.7%	408,252	0.8%
All Other	4,310	0.7%	427,372	0.9%
Total	583,039	100.0%	$ 48,229,106	100.0%

Uncollectible Fines —April 2002 to March 2003

Resident of	Number of Uncollectible Fines	Per Cent of Total Number	Dollar Value of Uncollectible Fines	Per Cent of Total Value
Alberta	25,694	97.0%	$ 3,185,475	92.7%
British Columbia	230	0.9%	110,239	3.2%
Saskatchewan	120	0.5%	46,850	1.4%
All Other	453	1.6%	95,383	2.7%
Total	26,497	100.0%	$ 3,437,947	100.0%

Uncollectible Fines - October 2001 to March 2002

Resident of	Number of Uncollectible Fines	Per Cent of Total Number	Dollar Value of Uncollectible Fines	Per Cent of Total Value
Alberta	12,064	96.9%	$ 1,418,885	93.0%
British Columbia	98	0.8%	50,040	3.3%
Saskatchewan	38	0.3%	15,183	1.0%
All Other	247	2.0%	41,537	2.7%
Total	12,447	100.0%	$ 1,525,645	100.0%

Outstanding Fines - at March 31, 2003

Resident of	Number of Outstanding Fines	Per Cent of Total Number	Dollar Value of Outstanding Fines	Per Cent of Total Value
Alberta	485,875	91.5%	$ 69,964,536	91.2%
British Columbia	22,837	4.3%	3,323,766	4.3%
Saskatchewan	9,799	1.8%	1,444,414	1.9%
All Other	12,591	2.4%	2,019,748	2.6%
Total	531,102	100.0%	$ 76,752,464	100.0%

Outstanding Fines - at March 31, 2002

Resident of	Number of Outstanding Fines	Per Cent of Total Number	Dollar Value of Outstanding Fines	Per Cent of Total Value
Alberta	447,249	93.6%	$ 61,806,621	92.5%
British Columbia	14,993	3.1%	2,374,210	3.6%
Saskatchewan	6,710	1.4%	1,060,975	1.6%
All Other	8,888	1.9%	1,572,961	2.4%
Total	477,840	100.0%	$ 66,814,767	100.0%

Fine Collection Cost Estimates

Overview:

During the 2000/01 fiscal year costing methodologies were developed to estimate the cost of collecting a provincial statute fine and the cost of collecting a federal statute (*Criminal Code* and other) fine. The estimated cost of collecting a provincial statute fine is related to the number of violation tickets received by all Provincial Court offices in Alberta. The estimated cost of collecting a federal statute fine is related to the approximate number of Fine Orders in all Provincial Court offices. The estimated costs are those incurred by Alberta Justice in Court Services, Criminal Justice and Strategic Services programs.

Estimated Cost of Collecting a Provincial Statute Fine — 2002/03 and 2001/02

There were 1.354 million violation tickets received by all Provincial Court offices in 2002/03 and 1.363 million in 2001/02. The major cost components for Court Services are the Calgary and Edmonton Provincial Traffic Courts, ticket processing costs in the regional provincial courts and the cost of violation ticket printing and direct general and regional overhead expenditures. Criminal Justice costs include paralegal prosecutors and support staff and first appearance centres in Calgary and Edmonton. Strategic Services costs are for the operation and maintenance of the Justice Online Information Network (JOIN) system applicable to violation tickets and for postage and handling of the Notice of Conviction mail-outs.

The table below summarizes the provincial statute and municipal bylaw fine payments received and the cost for violation tickets received by all Provincial Court offices.

Total Provincial Statute and Municipal Bylaw Payments Received

		2002/03	2001/02
Provincial Acts - Fine and Surcharge		$ 96,530,086	$ 87,510,832
Municipal Bylaw		6,517,451	6,575,570
Late Payment Penalty		9,762,753	9,740,885
Total Violation Ticket Payments	A	$ 112,810,290	$ 103,827,289
Cost for Violation Tickets Received by All Courts			
Court Services and Criminal Justice		$ 9,430,349	$ 9,958,587
Strategic Services		3,126,385	2,696,317
Total Estimated Cost	B	$ 12,556,734	$ 12,654,904
Cost per Dollar Collected (B/A)		$ 0.11	$ 0.12

Estimated Cost of Collecting a Federal Statute Fine —2002/03 and 2001/02

There were approximately 48,296 Fine Orders in all Provincial Court offices in 2002/03 and 45,815 in 2001/02. The major cost components for Court Services are the salary and benefit costs of court staff and Provincial Court judges with associated supplies and services costs. Criminal Justice costs are primarily the salary and benefit costs of the Crown prosecutors. Strategic Services costs are for the operation and maintenance of the JOIN system applicable to criminal case tracking. Strategic Services also pays for the salary and other operating costs for the Fines Collection Unit who collect *Criminal Code* fines on behalf of all courts in the province.

The table below summarizes the federal statute fine payments received and the cost for all Fine Orders prepared by all Provincial Court offices.

Total Federal Statute Payments Received

		2002/03	2001/02
Federal Acts - Fine and Surcharge	A	$ 10,024,349	$ 12,235,507
Cost for Fine Orders by All Courts			
Court Services and Criminal Justice		$ 13,975,345	$ 13,770,362
Strategic Services		941,296	764,562
Total Estimated Cost	B	$ 14,916,641	$ 14,534,924
Cost per Dollar Collected (B/A)		$ 1.49	$ 1.19

SUPPLEMENTARY MINISTRY FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Supplementary Ministry Financial Information

FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2003

Office of the Public Trustee Financial Statements

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Notice to Readers

These Office of the Public Trustee financial statements do not form part of the consolidated financial statements of the Ministry of Justice.

The balances relating to the Office of the Public Trustee as included in Note 8 of the Ministry s financial statements are based on the available information on April 30, 2003. Therefore they may not agree with the Office of the Public Trustee s financial statements, which include adjustments in the intervening period from April 30 to the finalization of financial statements.

AUDITOR GENERAL
Alberta

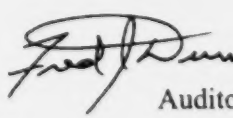
AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Minister of Justice and Attorney General:

I have audited the balance sheet of the Office of the Public Trustee, Estates and Trusts as at March 31, 2003 and the statements of changes to client assets, Common Fund operations and Special Reserve Fund operations for the year then ended. These financial statements are the responsibility of the management of the Office of the Public Trustee. My responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on my audit.

I conducted my audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that I plan and perform an audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation.

In my opinion, the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Office of the Public Trustee, Estates and Trusts as at March 31, 2003 and the changes to client assets, and the results of the operations of the Common Fund and the Special Reserve Fund for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles.


FCA
Auditor General

Edmonton, Alberta
May 30, 2003

Office of the Public Trustee
Estates and Trusts
Balance Sheets as at March 31, 2003

	(in thousands) 2003	2002
Trust Funds Under Administration		
Bank Accounts (Note 4)	$8,408	$14,235
Common Fund Investments (Note 5)	348,759	337,880
Special Reserve Fund Investments (Note 6)	50,074	51,183
Accrued Investment Income	7,561	7,611
	$414,802	$410,909
Client Assets		
Securities and Investments (Note 7)	33,195	28,152
Real Estate Holdings	20,231	19,676
Accounts Receivable	5,442	5,328
Personal Property and Other Assets	5,618	4,117
	$64,486	$57,273
	$479,288	$468,182
Client Liabilities		
Accounts Payable	$11,335	$9,692
Mortgages and Notes Payable	1,857	1,345
	$13,192	$11,037
Net Assets Held in Trust for Clients	$466,096	$457,145
	$479,288	$468,182

The accompanying notes are part of these financial statements.

Office of the Public Trustee
Estates and Trusts
Statement of Changes to Client Assets
For the Year ended March 31, 2003

	(in thousands) 2003	2002
Source of Client Assets		
Pensions, Benefits and Settlement Received	$62,349	$69,979
Client Assets Acquired During the Year	28,065	34,886
Income Earned on Fund Investments (Note 8)	24,792	24,713
Other Client Funds Received	6,457	8,249
Income from Client Investments	1,339	1,424
Total Client Assets Acquired	$123,002	$139,251
Disposition of Client Assets		
Distributions to Beneficiaries	49,315	41,077
Payments for Care and Maintenance of Clients	41,247	40,143
Assets Released to Clients	14,759	15,690
Taxes Paid on Behalf of Clients	3,986	3,518
Administration Fees Paid to the Public Trustee	3,580	3,202
Common Fund Management Fee	600	536
Goods and Services Taxes Paid	295	266
Fund Operating Expenses	237	268
Assurance Payments to, or on Behalf of Clients (Note 3)	32	12
Total Dispositions of Client Assets	$114,051	$104,712
Increase in Client Assets	8,951	34,539
Net Assets Held for Clients - Beginning of Year	457,145	422,606
Net Assets Held For Clients — End of Year	$466,096	$457,145

The accompanying notes are part of these financial statements.

Office of the Public Trustee
Estates and Trusts
Common Fund Statement of Operations
For the Year Ended March 31, 2003

	(in thousands) 2003	2002
Common Fund Revenue		
Revenue from Investments	$21,658	$20,880
Interest from Deposits	279	605
Total Revenue (Note 8)	$21,937	$21,485
Expenses		
Management Fees (Note 8)	600	536
General Expenses	98	113
Investment Custody Fees	74	68
Goods and Services Taxes on Management Fees (Note 8)	42	38
Bank Charges	29	29
CDIC Insurance	22	22
	865	806
Revenue Available for Distribution	21,072	20,679
Distributed to Beneficiaries During the Period	24,664	26,755
Deficit for the Year	(3,592)	(6,076)
Transfer from the Special Reserve (Note 3)	3,592	6,076
Net	-	-

The accompanying notes are part of these financial statements.

Office of the Public Trustee
Estates and Trusts
Special Reserve Fund Statement of Operations
For the Year Ended March 31, 2003

	(in thousands) 2003	2002
Reserve Fund Revenue		
Revenue from Investments	$2,835	3,202
Interest from Deposits	20	26
Total Revenue (Note 8)	2,855	3,228
Expenses		
Custody and Other Fees	14	35
Amount that interest paid to clients was greater than the earnings of the common fund —*Public Trustee Act*, s.28(3)(a) (Note 3)	3,592	6,076
Assurance payments to, or on behalf of clients for errors and omissions of the Public Trustee - *Public Trustee Act*, s.28(11) (Note 3)	32	12
	3,638	6,123
Net Deficit for the Year	$(783)	$(2,895)

The accompanying notes are part of these financial statements.

Office of the Public Trustee
Estates and Trusts
Notes to the Financial Statements
Year Ended March 31, 2003

Note 1 Authority

The Public Trustee and Special Reserve Fund operate under the authority of the *Public Trustee Act*, Chapter P-44, Revised Statutes of Alberta 2000, as amended.

The Public Trustee provides access to social programs administered by Alberta Justice by protecting the financial interests of vulnerable Albertans through the administration of the estates of dependent adults, decedents and minors.

Note 2 Significant Accounting Policies and Reporting Practices

(a) Reporting Entity

The Office of the Public Trustee is part of the Ministry of Justice and for which the Minister of Justice is accountable. These statements reflect the trust assets and related income and expenses, including administration fees charged by the Office of the Public Trustee to administer the trusts. The entire cost of operating the Office of the Public Trustee can be found in the financial statements of the Ministry of Justice.

(b) Basis of Financial Reporting

Revenues

Income from securities held for specific clients is recorded when received. Otherwise all revenues from investments are reported on the accrual method of accounting.

Expenses

An amount is paid each year out of the income of the common fund to the general revenues of the province and applied towards the cost of administering the common fund.

Assets

Certain trust assets as recorded in these financial statements represent management s best estimate of fair value based on currently available information. The value accorded to client assets at the time of recording remains unchanged until disposition or conclusion of administration, whichever occurs first. Actual value of these trust assets may vary materially from the recorded amounts.

(b) Basis of Financial Reporting (continued)

Assets (continued)

Investments of the common and special reserve funds are valued at amortized cost. Client assets are recorded at the estimated value of the asset at the date the Office of the Public Trustee obtains custody. Client annuities, included in Other Securities, are valued at present values based on the guaranteed term of the annuity discounted at estimated interest rates prevailing for the term of the annuity. Where estimated values are not readily determinable, assets are recorded at nominal value.

Liabilities

Liabilities represent all known financial obligations payable by estates at the fiscal year end.

Note 3 Estates and Beneficiaries Trust Accounts

Certain money held by the Public Trustee on behalf of its clients is invested in a common fund to provide a competitive rate of return for clients. All of these investments comply with the *Trustee Act*. Under the authority of the *Public Trustee Act* investment earnings of the common fund in excess of the amount of regulated interest payable to estates, are paid into the special reserve fund. When investment earnings of the common fund are not sufficient to meet interest obligations set by regulation, the deficiency is paid from the special reserve fund.

Under section 28(4) of the *Public Trustee Act*, the Public Trustee and Deputy Provincial Treasurer jointly hold the special reserve fund. Its purposes are to:

- Act as an assurance fund to compensate clients for errors and omissions of the Public Trustee (section 28(11)).
- Make up deficiencies in common fund earnings (section 28(3)(a)).
- Fund any deficiency between the realized value of common fund investments and the total of client trust funds on deposit (section 28(3)(b)).

Note 4 Bank Accounts

Bank accounts include deposits in the Consolidated Cash Investment Trust Fund (CCITF) of the Province of Alberta. Alberta Finance manages CCITF with the objective of providing competitive interest income to depositors while maintaining maximum security and liquidity of depositors capital. The portfolio is comprised of high quality short-term and mid-term fixed income securities with a maximum term to maturity of five years. Interest is earned on the daily cash balance at the average rate of CCITF s earnings, which varies depending on prevailing market interest rates. Due to the short-term nature of these deposits, the carrying value approximates fair value.

Note 5 Common Fund Investments
(in thousands)

Common fund investments consist of fixed term securities and are carried at cost or amortized cost:

	2003	2002
Government of Canada	$ 48,874	$53,017
Provincial Government Issues	247,969	229,890
Municipal	6,184	6,208
Major Banks and Corporations	40,732	40,765
ATB Financial	5,000	8,000
	$348,759	$337,88[illegible]
Market Value	$368,404	$341,[illegible]

Note 6 Special Reserve Fund Investments
(in thousands)

Special reserve fund investments consist of fixed term securities and are carried at cost or amortized cost:

	2003	2002
Government of Canada	$12,568	$15,928
Province of Alberta	1,464	1,476
Other Provinces	35,509	33,245
Corporate	533	534
	$50,074	$51,183
Market Value	$51,987	$51,797

Note 7 Client Assets - Securities and investments
(in thousands)

Estate securities consist of:

	2003	2002
Term and RRSP Deposits — PaValue	$4,937	$5,733
Government of Canada Bonds — PaValue	685	704
Provincial Issues — PaValue	25	128
Shares — Estimated MarkeValue	3,202	2,911
Other Securities — Estimated or NominaValue	24,346	18,676
	$33,195	$28,152

Note 8 Investment Income
(in thousands)

	2003	2002
Common Investment Fund *	$21,937	$21,485
Special Reserve Fund	2,855	3,228
	$24,792	$24,713

* Pursuant to section 25(4)(b) of the *Public Trustee Act,* The Lieutenant Governor in Council may prescribe fees for the management of the common fund. Fees and taxes paid for the year ended March 31, 2003 amounted to $642 and $574 for the year ended March 31, 2002.

Note 9 Contingent Liabilities
(in thousands)

Section 28(11) of the *Public Trustee Act* provides that payment of claims against the Public Trustee for irrecoverable loss or damages as a result of an act or omission of the Public Trustee in the performance of his duties may be made from the special reserve fund.

Claims against the Public Trustee, which had not been resolved as at March 31, 2003 amounted to $14,680 excluding interest (2002 - $14,580). No provision has been made for these unresolved claims, as the ultimate outcome cannot be predicted.

Note 10 Comparative Figures

Certain 2002 figures have been reclassified to conform to the 2003 presentation.

Note 11 Approval of Financial Statements

The Deputy Minister of Justice and Attorney General and the Public Trustee approved these financial statements.

Alphabetical List Of Entities' Financial Statements In Ministry 2002-03 Annual Reports

ENTITIES INCLUDED IN THE CONSOLIDATED GOVERNMENT REPORTING ENTITY

Ministry, Department, Fund or Agency	*Ministry Annual Report*
Agriculture Financial Services Corporation	Agriculture, Food and Rural Development
Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission	Health and Wellness
Alberta Energy and Utilities Board	Energy
Alberta Foundation for the Arts	Community Development
Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission	Gaming
Alberta Government Telephones Commission, The	Finance
Alberta Heritage Foundation for Medical Research Endowment Fund	Revenue
Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund	Revenue
Alberta Heritage Scholarship Fund	Revenue
Alberta Heritage Science and Engineering Research Endowment Fund	Revenue
Alberta Historical Resources Foundation, The	Community Development
Alberta Insurance Council	Finance
Alberta Municipal Financing Corporation	Finance
Alberta Pensions Administration Corporation	Finance
Alberta Petroleum Marketing Commission	Energy
Alberta Research Council Inc.	Innovation and Science
Alberta Risk Management Fund	Revenue
Alberta School Foundation Fund	Learning
Alberta Science and Research Authority	Innovation and Science
Alberta Securities Commission	Revenue
Alberta Social Housing Corporation	Seniors
Alberta Sport, Recreation, Parks and Wildlife Foundation	Community Development
Alberta Treasury Branches	Finance
ATB Investment Services Inc.	Finance
Child and Family Services Authorities:	Children's Services
Awasak Child and Family Services Authority	
Calgary Rocky View Child and Family Services Authority	
Child and Family Services Authority Region 13	
Child and Family Services Authority Region 14	
Diamond Willow Child and Family Services Authority	
Hearthstone Child and Family Services Authority	
Keystone Child and Family Services Authority	
Ma' Mowe Capital Region Child and Family Services Authority	

ENTITIES INCLUDED IN THE CONSOLIDATED GOVERNMENT REPORTING ENTITY

Ministry, Department, Fund or Agency	*Ministry Annual Report*
Child and Family Services Authorities:	Children's Services
Metis Settlements Child and Family Services Authority	
Neegan Awas'sak Child and Family Services Authority	
Ribstone Child and Family Services Authority	
Sakaigun Asky Child and Family Services Authority	
Sakaw-Askiy Child and Family Services Authority	
Silver Birch Child and Family Services Authority	
Southeast Alberta Child and Family Services Authority	
Sun Country Child and Family Services Authority	
West Yellowhead Child and Family Services Authority	
Windsong Child and Family Services Authority	
Credit Union Deposit Guarantee Corporation	Finance
Crop Reinsurance Fund of Alberta	Agriculture, Food and Rural Development
Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development	Agriculture, Food and Rural Development
Department of Children's Services	Children's Services
Department of Community Development	Community Development
Department of Energy	Energy
Department of Finance	Finance
Department of Gaming	Gaming
Department of Health and Wellness	Health and Wellness
Department of Innovation and Science	Innovation and Science
Department of Learning	Learning
Department of Revenue	Revenue
Department of Seniors	Seniors
Department of Solicitor General	Solicitor General
Department of Sustainable Resource Development	Sustainable Resource Development
Environmental Protection and Enhancement Fund	Sustainable Resource Development
Gainers Inc.	Finance
Government House Foundation, The	Community Development
Historic Resources Fund	Community Development
Human Rights, Citizenship and Multiculturalism Education Fund	Community Development
iCORE Inc.	Innovation and Science
Lottery Fund	Gaming
Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development[1]	Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development
Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development	Agriculture, Food and Rural Development
Ministry of Children's Services	Children's Services
Ministry of Community Development	Community Development
Ministry of Economic Development[1]	Economic Development

[1] Ministry includes only the department so separate department financial statements are not necessary.

ENTITIES INCLUDED IN THE CONSOLIDATED GOVERNMENT REPORTING ENTITY

Ministry, Department, Fund or Agency	*Ministry Annual Report*
Ministry of Energy	Energy
Ministry of Environment[1]	Environment
Ministry of Finance	Finance
Ministry of Executive Council[1]	Executive Council
Ministry of Gaming	Gaming
Ministry of Government Services[1]	Government Services
Ministry of Health and Wellness	Health and Wellness
Ministry of Human Resources and Employment[1]	Human Resources and Employment
Ministry of Infrastructure[1]	Infrastructure
Ministry of Innovation and Science	Innovation and Science
Ministry of International and Intergovernmental Relations[1]	International and Intergovernmental Relations
Ministry of Justice[1]	Justice
Ministry of Learning	Learning
Ministry of Municipal Affairs[1]	Municipal Affairs
Ministry of Revenue	Revenue
Ministry of Seniors	Seniors
Ministry of Solicitor General	Solicitor General
Ministry of Sustainable Resource Development	Sustainable Resource Development
Ministry of Transportation[1]	Transportation
N.A. Properties (1994) Ltd.	Finance
Natural Resources Conservation Board	Sustainable Resource Development
Persons with Developmental Disabilities Community Boards	Community Development
Calgary Region Community Board	
Central Region Community Board	
Edmonton Region Community Board	
Michener Centre Facility Board[2]	
Northeast Region Community Board	
Northwest Region Community Board	
Provincial Board	
South Region Community Board	
Provincial Judges and Masters in Chambers Reserve Fund	Finance
Supplementary Retirement Plan Reserve Fund	Finance
Victims of Crime Fund	Solicitor General
Wild Rose Foundation, The	Community Development

[1] Ministry includes only the department so separate department financial statements are not necessary.

[2] Dissolved July 23, 2002

ENTITIES NOT INCLUDED IN THE CONSOLIDATED GOVERNMENT REPORTING ENTITY

Fund or Agency	*Ministry Annual Report*
Alberta Cancer Board	Health and Wellness
Alberta Foundation for Health Research	Innovation and Science
Alberta Heritage Foundation for Medical Research	Innovation and Science
Alberta Heritage Foundation for Science and Engineering Research	Innovation and Science
Alberta Mental Health Board	Health and Wellness
Alberta Teachers' Retirement Fund Board	Learning
Improvement Districts' Trust Account	Municipal Affairs
Local Authorities Pension Plan	Finance
Long-Term Disability Income Continuance Plan - Bargaining Unit	Human Resources and Employment
Long-Term Disability Income Continuance Plan - Management, Opted Out and Excluded	Human Resources and Employment
Management Employees Pension Plan	Finance
Provincial Judges and Masters in Chambers Pension Plan	Finance
Public Post Secondary Institutions	Learning
Public Service Management (Closed Membership) Pension Plan	Finance
Public Service Pension Plan	Finance
Regional Health Authorities	Health and Wellness
School Boards	Learning
Special Areas Trust Account, The	Municipal Affairs
Special Forces Pension Plan	Finance
Supplementary Retirement Plan for Provincial Judges and Masters in Chambers	Finance
Supplementary Retirement Plan for Public Service Managers	Finance
Workers' Compensation Board	Human Resources and Employment